



SABINA AUGUSTA



An Imperial Journey

T. COREY BRENNAN

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The genesis of my project goes back almost two decades, though hardly of continuous work. In the spring of 1998 I had the good fortune to hold a Membership at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, where I had started work on literary culture under the Roman emperor Hadrian (reigned 117–138 CE). I fully intended to continue research into the Hadrianic era, but I found myself pulled in many other different directions, including work on a prosopographical study of elite women of the Roman Republic (still in progress). Indeed, it was not until my time on the administrative staff at the American Academy in Rome (2009–2012) that I found myself able to re-engage with the second century CE.

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Abbreviations and Note on Translations

The abbreviations below for modern works depend on those, when available, of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (4th edition), ed. S. Hornblower, A. Spawforth, and E. Eidinow, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Ancient works are identified by their abbreviations in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (except that *HA*, not *SHA* = *Historia Augusta*), supplemented by those of *A Greek-English Lexicon* (9th edition with revised supplement), ed. H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, H. S. Jones, and R. McKenzie, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

<i>AE</i>	<i>L'Année Épigraphique</i> , published in <i>Revue Archéologique</i> and separately (1888–).
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> (1972–).
<i>BM Coins, Rom. Emp.</i>	<i>British Museum Catalogue of Coins of the Roman Empire</i> (1923–).
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> (1863–).
Dessau, <i>ILS</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> , ed. H. Dessau (1892–1916).
<i>FGrH</i>	<i>Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> , ed. F. Jacoby (1923–).
Goetz, <i>CGL</i>	<i>Corpus glossariorum Latinorum</i> , 7 vols., ed. G. Goetz (1888–1923).
<i>IC</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Creticae</i> , 4 vols., ed. M. Guarducci (1935–1950).
<i>IEph.</i>	<i>Die Inschriften von Ephesos</i> (= <i>IK</i> 11.1–17.4) (1979–1984).
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> (1873–).
<i>IGRom.</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes</i> , ed. R. Cagnat and others (1906–).
<i>IK</i>	<i>Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien</i> (1972–).
<i>ILLRP</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae</i> , ed. A. Degrassi, I ² (1965) and II (1963).
<i>IMagn.</i>	<i>Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander</i> , ed. O. Kern (1900).
<i>Inscr. Ital.</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Italiae</i> (1931/2–).

<i>I</i> Portes	<i>Les Portes du désert. Recueil des inscriptions grecques d'Antinooupolis, Tentyris, Koptos, Apollonopolis Parva et Apollonopolis Magna</i> , ed. A. Bernand (1984).
<i>LGPN</i>	<i>A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names</i> , 7 vols., ed. P. M. Fraser and E. Matthews (1987–2014). <i>LGPN Online</i> at lgpn.ox.ac.uk
<i>LTUR</i>	<i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae</i> , 6 vols., ed. M. Steinby (1993–2000).
<i>LTUR Suburbium</i>	<i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae Suburbium</i> , 5 vols., ed. A. La Regina and others (2001–2008).
McCabe, <i>Ephesos</i> ; <i>Magnesia</i> ; <i>Metropolis</i> ; <i>Miletos</i>	<i>Ephesos/Magnesia/Metropolis/Miletos Inscriptions. Texts and Lists. The Princeton Project on the Inscriptions of Anatolia</i> , The Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, ed. D. F. McCabe, (1984–1991). Electronically published as Packard Humanities Institute CD #6 (1991) and CD #7 (1996) = http://epigraphy.packhum.org/ .
<i>Minge, PG</i>	<i>Patrologiae Cursus, series Graeca</i> , ed. J.- P. Minge (1857–1866).
<i>Minge, PL</i>	<i>Patrologiae Cursus, series Latina</i> , ed. J.- P. Minge (1841–1865).
<i>PFayum</i>	<i>Fayum Towns and Their Papyri</i> , ed. B. P. Grenfell, A. S. Hunt, and D. G. Hogarth (1900).
<i>PGM</i>	<i>Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri</i> , 2 vols., ed. K. Preisendanz and others, 2nd edition (1973–1974).
<i>PIR</i>	<i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani Saeculi I, II, III</i> , 1st edition by E. Klebs and H. Dessau (1897–1898); 2nd edition by E. Groag, A. Stein, and others (1933–).
<i>PMGF</i>	<i>Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> , ed. M. Davies and D. L. Page (1991).
<i>PMil. Vogl.</i>	<i>Papiri della R. Università degli Studi di Milano</i> , ed. A. Vogliano and others (1937–2001).
<i>POsl.</i>	<i>Papyri Osloenses</i> , ed. S. Eitrem and L. Amundsen (1925–1936).
<i>POxy.</i>	<i>Oxyrhynchus Papyri</i> , ed. B. P. Grenfell, A. S. Hunt, and others (1898–).
<i>RAC</i>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum: Sachworterbuch zur Auseinandersetzung des Christentums mit der antiken Welt</i> , ed. T. Klauser and others (1941–).
<i>RE</i>	<i>Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , ed. A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll (1893–).
<i>RIC</i>	H. Mattingly, E. A. Sydenham, and others, <i>Roman Imperial Coinage</i> (1923–1967); revised edition of vol. I only, ed. C. H. V. Sutherland and R. A. G. Carson (1984).

<i>RPC</i>	<i>Roman Provincial Coinage</i> , ed. M. Amandry, A. M. Burnett, and others (1992–). <i>Roman Provincial Coinage Online</i> (includes vols. III–IV, VII 1 and IX) at http://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/ .
<i>RRC</i>	<i>Roman Republican Coinage</i> , 2 vols., ed. M. H. Crawford (1974).
<i>SEG</i>	<i>Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum</i> (1923–). <i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum Online</i> , ed. A. Chaniotis, T. Corsten, N. Papazarkadas, and R. A. Tybout at http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/ .
<i>SNG ANS</i>	<i>Sylloge Numorum [sic] Graecorum. The Collection of the American Numismatic Society</i> (1969–).
<i>SNG Copenhagen</i>	<i>Sylloge nummorum Graecorum. The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals, Danish National Museum</i> (1942–1987).
<i>Syll.</i> ³	<i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> , ed. W. Dittenberger; 3rd edition, ed. by F. Hiller von Gaertringen and others (1915–1924).
<i>Syme, RP</i>	R. Syme, <i>Roman Papers</i> , 7 vols., ed. E. Badian and A. R. Birley (vols. I–II) and A.R. Birley (vols. III–VII) (1979–1991).
<i>TAM</i>	<i>Tituli Asiae Minoris</i> , ed. E. Kalinka and others (1901–).

Translations of Suetonius, Dio Cassius, and the *Historia Augusta* are generally adapted from the Loeb Classical Library editions of (respectively) J. C. Rolfe (*Suetonius*, 2 vols., 1914, rev. K. R. Bradley, 1998); E. Cary and H. B. Foster (*Dio's Roman History*, 9 vols., 1914–1927); and D. Magie, A. O'Brien-Moore, and S. H. Ballou (*The Scriptores historiae Augustae*, 3 vols., 1922–1932). Translations of other ancient texts (where not otherwise indicated) are my own. Throughout this book, I have taken the liberty of translating short quotations from works of modern scholarship in French, German, and Italian into English.

Introduction

This book may strike many as an exercise in the impossible. My aim here is to synthesize and make some sense of the seemingly plentiful but in fact agonizingly difficult sources on the second-century CE Roman empress Sabina, and shape what has come down to us into something approaching a narrative.

Sabina was the wife of P. Aelius Hadrianus (Hadrian), the emperor who succeeded M. Ulpius Traianus (Trajan). Indeed, Sabina represents a key link between the two emperors: Trajan was granduncle to Sabina on her mother's side. He came to the throne in January 98, and saw Hadrian and Sabina marry shortly afterward. Just days before Trajan died in August 117, he was reported to have adopted Hadrian. This act provided a formal basis for Hadrian to rule as Trajan's successor.

Sabina and her husband were childless at this point, and were to remain so as the imperial couple. But Hadrian waited almost a full two decades to institute his own adoptive plans. The last 30 months of the reign presented a dizzying and dramatic series of events in this regard: Hadrian's choice and energetic public promotion of a youngish but sickly heir, who soon died; the loss of Sabina, to whom he quickly granted divine honors; the adoption of a distinguished ex-consul (i.e., holder of Rome's highest regular magistracy), Antoninus, in a complex scheme that sought to settle the succession question also for the subsequent generation; and, just a few months after cementing those arrangements, Hadrian's own death in July 138, which immediately ignited a fiery debate between his successor, Antoninus, and the Senate on his political legacy.

Some basic facts put our task into perspective. All told, specific references to Sabina in ancient literary sources total about 200 words. An average adult could comfortably read aloud a translation of that amount of text in about 90 seconds. And what we get is late (there is basically nothing for almost a century after Sabina's death) and markedly non-sympathetic.

This is what the literary texts tell us.¹ Sabina was a "niece" of Trajan; no source offers the more specific "grandniece," which was most decidedly the case. Not long after that emperor came to power (i.e., 98 CE), Sabina married Hadrian, evidently for dynastic reasons; the late-second/early-third-century consular biographer Marius Maximus related that Trajan did not support the match but his wife, Plotina, prevailed.

Some two decades of silence follow, through and beyond Hadrian's succession of Trajan as emperor in 117. A dubious source relates that Sabina absented herself from a birthday celebration for Hadrian, in perhaps one of the early years of his principate (i.e., 119–121). There was a scandal somehow involving Sabina, ostensibly at the time of Hadrian's expedition to Britain (122). That offense resulted in the dismissal of his praetorian prefect Septicius Clarus; the correspondence secretary, Suetonius; and (we are told) many others. Hadrian and Sabina both are said to have openly voiced their loathing for the other. Hadrian allegedly said he found her difficult enough to divorce but felt compelled to remain married because of his position as emperor, whereas Sabina took active precautions not to give Hadrian an heir, who might inherit his monstrous personal qualities. Sabina did eventually receive the title of *Augusta* when Hadrian took that of *pater patriae* ("father of the fatherland"). But he treated his wife extremely poorly and eventually drove her to commit suicide, perhaps even offering the poison.

It is to the nonliterary sources that we must turn to fill out this bleak portrait. The epitome (summary) of Dio Cassius, the *Historia Augusta*, and the historical summarizers and chronographers who mention the figure of Sabina fail to mention basic information that is otherwise available to us, and thus presumably to them. Inscriptions and coins with a relevance to Sabina are plentiful, and offer some important additional information. That includes the identification of Trajan's sister, Marciana, and her daughter, Matidia the Elder, as respectively grandmother and mother of Sabina; the presence of Sabina on at least some

part of her husband's extensive journeys; and Hadrian's deification of her after death. That last item is a notable omission, which goes some way toward undercutting the relentless emphasis of our literary sources on the imperial couple's marital discord.

The literary sources also are wholly silent on the subject of interaction between Sabina and the most enigmatic personality of her husband's court—Antinoös, a youth whom the emperor somehow plucked from the obscurity of his native Claudopolis in Bithynia, and then established as his closest companion and perhaps (as was widely supposed) lover. The chronology is not quite certain, but it appears that the better part of the years 129 and 130 saw Hadrian, Antinoös, and Sabina together traversing the provinces of Asia Minor, Syria, Judaea, Arabia, and finally Egypt, where the young man drowned in the Nile in late October 130. Lavish heroic honors for Antinoös and energetic official promotion of his image followed, events that numerous written sources mention and castigate. But they offer nothing on what Sabina might be supposed to have said or thought about Antinoös or his relationship with her husband. There too the material sources (surprisingly) help. But all this evidence—literary, epigraphic, numismatic—rests on a most unstable foundation, for there are many desiderata in writing a biography even of Sabina's husband. As M. Beard has emphasized, "what is missing, crucially, is any substantial narrative of Hadrian's life or reign that attempts to lay out the events within some kind of chronological framework."²

The Inscriptions Mentioning Sabina

Consider first the limits of the epigraphic evidence. In his comprehensive 1969 study of the sources (especially iconographic) on Sabina, A. Carandini lists just over 60 individual inscriptions or groups of closely related inscriptions from the same location. We can add about another 30 that found publication only after the appearance of his study, or that Carandini excluded as too tangential (e.g., attestation of slaves or freed slaves of Sabina in Rome or elsewhere in Italy). More than 50 take the form of dedications primarily to Sabina (as opposed to Hadrian and Sabina jointly), the bulk of which are found on statue bases. The geographical distribution is gratifying, with few areas of the Roman Empire failing to contribute at least something. Of

the epigraphic material on Sabina that has emerged since Carandini's study, all the items—about two dozen in all—are from Rome's eastern provinces, and just three have secure dates.

It would be useful if the production of dedicatory inscriptions—or, for that matter, statues or local coins—allowed us to reconstruct the course of Hadrian's travels or to confirm the presence of Sabina on his peregrinations. Unfortunately, they can't. Some communities that demonstrably could not have hosted Hadrian (and thus Sabina) commemorated them all the same, in a show of general loyalty, or in the hope of attracting official favor or even a visit.³

Attaching precise dates to inscriptions commemorating the imperial couple is in general frustratingly difficult. Hadrian first reached the *suffect* (“substitute”) consulship in 108, and held the office only twice as emperor—for the years 118 and 119. Thus an inscription noting him simply as “consul III” can date to any of the years 119 through 138. Nor does reference to the number of imperial acclamations—i.e., formal, charisma-enhancing affirmations of a victorious commander—help very much. Whereas Trajan accepted the distinction a total of 13 times, Hadrian's only imperial acclamation following his accession came no earlier than the second half of 135, after the conclusion of the Jewish War occasioned by the Bar Kochba revolt (ca. 132–135), and toward the end of his reign. Even the reckoning of Hadrian's years of (mostly symbolic) tribunician power poses problems. Hadrian did not use it to date his coins, and the inscriptional evidence is such that we do not know for certain the calendar date on which the tribunician power was annually renewed. The fact that Hadrian is known to have died on 10 July 138 in his 22nd year of tribunician power seems to support 10 December (the traditional date under the Republic, and the one used by Trajan after 102) as the annual day of renewal.

Furthermore, evidence for the chronology of important additional titles can be murky. Practically from the start of Hadrian's principate, in the provinces there are inscriptions and sometimes coins naming the emperor as *pater patriae*, Sabina as *Augusta*, or both—anticipating official usage in Rome, where it clearly started in 128.⁴ In the east, Hadrian does seem to be termed *Olympios* (“Olympian,” an epithet especially of Zeus) only after winter 128/129, when he assumed the title in Athens. But Hadrian is called *theos* and Sabina *thea* (“god,” “goddess”) in their own lifetimes.

To be sure, some of these inscriptions offer welcome light on the life—and afterlife—of Sabina. Far in the interior of the province Africa Proconsularis, the town of Avitta Bibba made a joint dedication to Hadrian, his (adopted) son L. Aelius Caesar, and Sabina, which is dated to late 136 or 137. It shows that Sabina at the very least lived long enough to see the adoption. Inscriptions with explicit posthumous honors for Sabina outside of Rome and Italy are surprisingly lacking. But from Prusias ad Hypium in Bithynia comes an inscription showing that even after the year 212 CE, “Sabinian” and “Hadrianic” tribes still featured as two of the 12 constituent elements of the city’s civic organization.⁵

Coins from Rome and Rome’s Eastern Provinces Depicting Sabina

So far, our survey of the ancient sources on Sabina has brought little reason for cheer. The numismatic evidence offers a story that is a bit more refreshing. As it happens, “Sabina is the first Roman empress to have a sustained, regular production of coinage at Rome,” as notes R. Abdy.⁶ And that coinage appears in such a way that one can glimpse at least the outlines of the imperial policy at work. The study of the coins that emanated from the central mint at Rome is of extreme importance for understanding Hadrian’s presentation of his reign to his contemporary public and to posterity. The provincial issues from (exclusively) the eastern part of the Empire are of twofold interest, for they reflect both central policy and, to a certain degree, local reception of the regime.

The typology of Hadrian’s coins at Rome is reasonably well established.⁷ Our understanding of the basic chronology of Hadrian’s issues from the central Rome mint will soon deepen, thanks to R. Abdy’s new edition of the standard catalogue *Roman Imperial Coinage* II 2 for Hadrian, which is expected to supersede earlier studies, with much more focused attention on Sabina. For the relevant material outside of Rome, we are most fortunate to see the recent (2015) publication of *Roman Provincial Coinage* III, edited by M. Amandry and A. Burnett, which covers the reigns of Nerva, Trajan, and Hadrian. There the numismatic evidence for Sabina—which is all from the Greek east—is rich, though often hard to interpret.

Of crucial help is the fact that provincial issues depicting Sabina with corresponding developments in her iconography are plentiful,

with new unpublished types appearing on the art market with regular frequency. About 85 cities or towns are at present known to have issued coinage honoring Sabina either separately or in conjunction with Hadrian, with the total of individual types well surpassing 200. There is no dedicated study that attempts to analyze the whole. A. Carandini in a brief (and scattershot) synthesis views most provincial mints to be merely following the lead of Rome, but with varying results in the execution of Sabina's portrait, in some instances amounting to coarse deformations. What stands apart in the Roman provincial world are the coin issues of Alexandria, which Carandini praises for their specific and coherent attributes in Sabina's portraiture and which follow Roman models but with a taste for pompous elaboration and ornament. These Sabina coins quite valuably bear dates, specifically Hadrian's regnal years, in a near-continuous series spanning nine years (128/129, then 130/131 through 136/137).⁸

Even as our information now stands, we possess a crucial fact. Sabina appears on no coins minted at Rome—and only a single, quite isolated issue from the provinces—that can firmly be assigned to the first decade of Hadrian's reign. We shall see that it is fair to say that Sabina is conspicuous by her absence. But then there was a deluge. For the numismatic evidence from Rome, progressive changes on Sabina's coins in the obverse legends and her fashion hold out the promise of establishing a chronology from the minting that started in earnest in 128.

Sculptural Portraits of Sabina as Evidence

Coins were the only medium in antiquity able to broadcast an official image or message on a truly mass level. But Roman emperors also circulated multiple copies of sculpture of the same portrait type toward the same propagandistic ends, though with necessarily a more restricted audience and thus more localized impact. For Sabina, here too there is hope for a chronology of her sculptured images. One methodological difficulty is that, starting with the reign of the emperor Trajan (98–117), it becomes difficult to distinguish, on purely stylistic grounds, representations of imperial women from those of private individuals.⁹ Cases in which multiple copies exist, however, seem to suggest that an imperial woman is the subject.

Even taking into account the many problems and contested attributions, the total of sculptural representations of Sabina—there are at least 30 objects for which scholars find unanimity—seems quite enough to establish a workable corpus. The (few) statues we have for Sabina show that contemporary sculptors used popular preexisting forms, such as the Large and Small Herculaneum Women types, the Ceres type, and the Pudicitia type.¹⁰ Yet private citizens employed these standardized forms as well. And because of various developments in Sabina's known portraiture and also regional variations in practice, it is sometimes hard to distinguish her image from that of her mother, Matidia the elder (= Matidia I), or half-sister, Matidia the younger (= Matidia II), or even her grandmother Marciana, or (as noted above) whether it is an imperial woman at all, as opposed to an anonymous notable of the general period styling herself as Sabina. Additional complicating variables in identification and interpretation of portraits make for a very long list.

But the abundance of reasonably secure portraits and the fact that the public image of Sabina undergoes a number of shifts give us hope to trace real development. It is R. Abdy who has produced the most careful work in regard to evaluating the cumulative evidence of both sculptures and coins in an attempt to offer a historical (as opposed to narrowly art historical or numismatic) interpretation of Sabina's portraiture. Any sequence of sculptural types must be tethered to the coin portraits. And to establish a chronology of Sabina's coins at the mint of Rome, Abdy employs a methodology that combines "the evolving obverse legend, the changing reverse types and the progress of hairstyle fashion" with "comparison to the hairstyles on dated provincial coinage." Indeed, Abdy is the first to take a comprehensive account of the evidence (Roman and eastern), and to exploit to the fullest the implied evidence of the dated coins of Alexandria, as well as those of Amisus in Pontus, which produced dated silver coins with Sabina on obverse from 134/135 through 137/138.¹¹

Finally, something must be said with regard to the iconography of Sabina on intaglios (i.e., engraved precious stones, often carved in reverse to make seals) and cameos (i.e., raised figures cut from multi-layered stones). These were prized luxury items that the Romans set into rings or wore as jewelry, depending on size.¹² The materials were expensive and the techniques of carving highly specialized. For carved gemstones meant as seals, the final product presumably was intended to be

unique. When we find a depiction of Sabina in this medium, surely we can attribute some significance to the fact that certain Roman notables (not necessarily contemporary to the empress) chose to wear it as personal ornament. Yet in general these objects come to us essentially without context, and identification of the precise female figure portrayed is often quite uncertain. In some instances the only evidence for the existence of an item is an antiquarian drawing, all too often of uncertain reliability. Plus this art form had a long history, which raises the very real possibility that a given item may not be ancient, but rather a modern copy—or even a modern original. Carandini in his 1969 work on Sabina considers about 50 engraved objects on gemstones and the like, and dismisses almost half of the images as too uncertain in terms of the identification.¹³

Modern Opinions of Sabina

Taken as a whole, the evidence on Hadrian's wife, Sabina, turns out to be simultaneously plentiful and frustrating. Yet a couple of items have had an outsized effect in shaping modern perceptions of the empress for scholars and popular writers alike. One is the fact that Hadrian chose to lavish a startling amount of attention on his companion Antinoös, in both life and death. The other is the statement in the late-antique grab bag known as the *Historia Augusta* that Hadrian “was in the habit of saying that, had he been a private citizen, he even would divorce her on the grounds that she was ill-tempered and difficult (*morosam et asperam*).”¹⁴ Since the *Historia Augusta* attributes that scathing verdict on Sabina's personality to Hadrian himself, and our literary sources offer us so little else on Sabina that is positive—and so much on Antinoös that is wildly suggestive—the working assumption has been that Sabina as empress, for all her public honors, seethed in misery, trapped in a loveless marriage.

In his groundbreaking biography of the emperor, first published in 1884, F. Gregorovius found Hadrian's supposed negative assessment of Sabina's personality reflected even in her portraiture. Many followed. A full eight decades later, M. Bieber opined, “Sabina [in her images] is pretty, insignificant, the expression rather morose and lifeless, the forms are picayunish.”¹⁵ In a twist, some observers consider that the empress's representations were meant to impress, all as part of the regime's efforts to smooth over very real marital discord.

Not all have approached the ancient evidence in this way. Already in 1919, W. D. Gray conceded Gregorovius' point that the portraits of Sabina strike one as "mournful" but refused to view that attribute as significant. "[A]s it happens, this grave, not to say morose, expression is characteristic of *all* the portraits of the ladies of Trajan's and Hadrian's courts, Plotina, Marciana, and Matidia as well as Sabina." Gray goes further: "[m]y conclusion is that this story of the unhappy marriage of Hadrian and Sabina is but one of the baseless fictions that survive in our histories of the Roman empire. For all we really know, Hadrian and his wife got on together without more than the normal amount of friction. . . . It does seem true however that Sabina exerted no great influence on Hadrian or his reign, and that she never played the role of a Plotina or a Livia."⁶

There is much more to say about the modern reception of Sabina, and we shall return to this question in the Epilogue after a full survey of the ancient evidence. I must stress that in this study I am not aiming to buttress one previously expressed view of Sabina or the other, much less to write a proper biography of this empress. Our information does not permit it. Rather, the most I can offer is an extended meditation on the depressingly sparse and largely polemical literary sources, and the vast nonliterary material comprised of honorific inscriptions, coins, and statuary, as well as the few relevant papyrological items. What I do hope to present is a narrative that illustrates the development of Sabina's partnership in Hadrian's principate. I argue that whatever the (much-discussed) dynamics of their marriage, Hadrian meant for Sabina to play a key role in promoting the public character of his rule. I am convinced that even within the limitation of our primary sources, there is enough for a new understanding of Sabina's public role, both in the context of Hadrian's principate and that of Rome's imperial women in the high Empire as a group.

I know of only two book-length works that are primarily devoted to Sabina (each in Italian). The first, and most important, is Carandini 1969, in which the focus is very much on portrait types, especially sculptural. More recently, there is Adembri and Nicolai 2007, which is an exhibition catalog meant to illustrate the significance of a single (repatriated) statue of Hadrian's wife in the guise of Venus Genetrix. But it contains a valuable series of expert contributions on Sabina in the context of the court culture of the early second century.

As one might imagine, discussion of Sabina finds its way into almost all of the biographical treatments of Hadrian, of which Birley

1997 currently holds the field. Similarly, Sabina comes up for brief discussion in all global treatments of imperial women of the high Empire (see, e.g., the recent works of Cenerini 2009, Freisenbruch 2012, and Minaud 2012), and occasionally in biographies of other empresses. The most relevant such contribution is that of Levick 2014, which is superb, especially in showing the importance of Sabina as a role model for later imperial women.

What I am attempting here is a synthesis of all available sources specifically on Sabina. My overarching aim is to situate Sabina in Hadrian's aspirations. As such, the book falls into three parts. The first six chapters are necessary prolegomena, devoted after this Introduction to the evolution of the construct of "empress" at Rome (Chapters 1 and 2), the birth family of Sabina and the general outlines of her life (3), and the personality and policies of her husband, Hadrian (4–5). The next five chapters (6–10) are concerned with setting out in detail the evidence (with discussion throughout) for Sabina's life, death and deification, and immediate legacy under the emperor Antoninus Pius (138–161). A concluding Epilogue sums up the main findings, and assesses the reception of Hadrian's efforts to promote his wife, with a glance at her afterlife in the early-modern and modern periods.

“Empress” at Rome

I use the title of “empress” in this study as a term of convenience. It really did not exist as such in Rome for the period under consideration.¹ True, there was the designation *Augusta*, a feminized version of ‘Augustus,’ i.e., Rome’s first emperor, who reigned 27 BCE–14 CE. In his will, he provided for the posthumous adoption of his (third) wife Livia into his own Julian family, and the conferment of *Augusta* upon her. Augustus himself was deified, and his widow, the newly minted “Julia Augusta,” now served as chief priestess of his cult. Subsequently, the title *Augusta* became expected for an emperor’s wife. But it was extended to other women of the imperial family as well, and so did not in the first instance mean “empress.”

The Greek-speaking parts of the empire translated *Augustus* and *Augusta* respectively as *Sebastos* and *Sebaste* (literally, “reverenced” or “venerable”). We find Greek sources also referring to the emperor’s wife as *basilissa* (“queen”) or, for that matter, *thea* (“goddess”)—even in the woman’s lifetime. It was largely the established practice of Hellenistic courts that informed such extravagant usages, now adapted to the realities of Roman rule. The fact remained that the position of Roman emperor’s wife was not an office and lacked a set title. Nonetheless, this status involved the potential for plenty of power and a staggering level of importance.

To understand the story of Sabina, it is crucial first to grasp the essentials of her formal position as wife of the emperor Hadrian. To do so involves tracing, at least in the barest of outlines, developments in women’s political prerogatives in the Roman imperial period up to

her time. The special focus in this chapter is on the towering figure of Livia—or more precisely, the nature of the precedents she generated.

Developments of the Triumviral Era of the Republic

The disintegration of the Roman Republican political system and the power struggles that followed the assassination of Julius Caesar on 15 March 44 BCE stimulated novel, ostentatious grants of honors to women for purposes of factional propaganda.² The year 43 BCE had introduced a period of absolute rule in Rome by *triumviri*, specifically M. Antonius (= Marc Antony), M. Aemilius Lepidus, and Octavian, granted special powers for a period of ten years. Octavian had a powerful advantage amid this trio. He was grandnephew and posthumously adopted son of Julius Caesar; born in 63 BCE as C. Octavius, through testamentary adoption he became C. Iulius Caesar Octavianus. When Caesar was deified in 42 BCE, Octavian then could insert into his nomenclature *Divi filius*—"son of a god." However, Caesar had not appointed Octavian his political heir (he hardly could have in that era), and so the young man had to assert that for himself.

After their creation as Triumvirs, these men lost little time in devising new ways to exploit the women in their families for political ends—even portraying them on coins, struck by traveling military mints or in the provinces. A watershed moment came in 35 BCE, when Octavian managed to have granted to his sister Octavia (already separated from her new husband Antony, and back in Rome) as well as to his wife Livia "statues, the right to administer their own affairs without a guardian" to whom a woman would be normally subject, "and the same security and inviolability as the tribunes [of the Plebs] enjoyed." That last privilege was an enormously powerful marker of status. Julius Caesar had received tribunician sacrosanctity in 44 BCE, and Octavian himself in 36 BCE. It is likely that the sacrosanctity encompassed not just physical security but also protection from verbal and written affronts. And so the grant greatly enhanced the social role of these two women.³ The immediate background in 35 BCE was Octavian's break with Antony, who now had the Ptolemaic queen Cleopatra VII as an ally (and lover), and was treating Octavia with open contempt.

All this came to an abrupt halt in September of 31 BCE, when Octavian scored a decisive naval victory over his antagonists off the promontory of Actium, in northwest Acarnania in Greece. Antony and

Cleopatra fled to Alexandria in Egypt, where Octavian pursued them. What followed was a siege, their suicides, and Octavian's annexation of Egypt. At this point, the constitutional powers Octavian had enjoyed as Triumvir had expired. Instead, he based his political position in good measure on a personal oath of loyalty he exacted in 32 BCE from Rome, Italy, and the western provinces. He also held the consulship consecutively in each of the years from 31 down to 23 BCE.

Formation of the Imperial Domus

On 16 January 27 BCE the Senate voted Octavian the honorific cognomen *Augustus*, which recalled the strong heaven-sent sign from Jupiter that indicated his approval of Romulus' foundation of Rome.⁴ The title that Augustus then adopted for himself to reflect his status was *princeps civitatis* (i.e., "leading citizen"). A new settlement followed, in which he received all of Rome's armed provinces as one super-province, which he would command for a fixed term in absence through legates. Egypt he would retain as a private estate. The People would govern the rest of the provinces through ex-magistrates, as they had in the Roman Republic: these included the "consular" (i.e., governed by ex-consuls) provinces of (north) Africa and Asia (Minor).

An important formal enhancement to Augustus' public status came in 23 BCE, when he received the full power of a plebeian tribune (*tribunicia potestas*), which now went beyond sacrosanctity to include the right to treat with the Senate in bringing up bills (and vetoing them if need be), and with the plebeian assembly in passing legislation. Augustus regarded this grant as so important that he used it to date the years of his reign, and also to designate a successor. Subsequent Roman emperors followed suit.

On the face of things, Augustus' ideological and military victory over Antony and the Ptolemaic queen Cleopatra and his official stance as restorer of the Republic should have made openly monarchical or dynastic gestures practically impossible. The fate of Caesar, assassinated in 44 BCE, was a powerful reminder. But Augustus found avenues all the same to elevate his household (*domus*)—the traditional sphere of Roman matrons—above all other ones and ensure popular and official regard for it.

In Roman terms, *domus* can carry a quite extended sense. It goes well beyond a physical dwelling and material holdings to include one's

kinship group (including ancestors) and *familia*, for which the English translation “family” hardly does justice. The term *familia* encompasses all individuals who are under the same paternal power (and more loosely, all of one’s relatives by blood), and also slaves and ex-slaves (freedpersons) serving in the household. Augustus successfully managed to impose the understanding that it was not just the *princeps* but also his relations who directed the state. In doing so he forcibly inserted his *domus* within the institutions of the *res publica* and prepared the ground for dynastic succession.⁵ One tangible symbol of his personal and family power was the imposing mausoleum and large park complex he built for himself and his relatives in Rome, in the northern Campus Martius.⁶

It would make for a long story to detail all the ways Augustus asserted his personal and family dominance and leveraged gratitude for the benefits he bestowed.⁷ In his own political autobiography, the long inscription known as the *Res Gestae*, it is telling that he places the highest premium on his acceptance of the rare honorific title *pater patriae* (“father of the fatherland”). The Senate had voted it to Cicero as consul in 63 BCE after he had quashed the Catilinarian affair, and to Caesar in 45 BCE after his decisive victory over the Pompeians at Munda (southern Spain). The phrase has an obvious affinity to *pater familias*, the Roman term for the head of household. But as A. Alföldi has demonstrated, Augustus’ designation as “national father” involved multiple levels of meaning, ranging from patron and savior to an implied comparison with Jupiter himself.⁸

Augustus seems to have refused the title on numerous occasions over the first 25 years of his reign before a dramatic final acceptance in the Senate on 5 February 2 BCE. Suetonius describes how Rome’s unanimous entreaty was presented to the *princeps* on that occasion; significantly, it was prefaced with a prayer for the ruler and his *domus*. Augustus in accepting the grant tearfully replied that he now had nothing more to pray for from the gods. Henceforth he used *pater patriae* as an element of his official titulature, featuring it immediately on his coins.⁹

Augustus’ Dynastic Plans

A sticking point for Augustus’ dynastic plans, however, is that he had no son. In looking toward future generations he had to place his hopes on his sister Octavia and daughter, Julia (born to him by his second

wife, Scribonia), plus of course the Senate's cooperation. Our sources represent the story that unfolded as a series of grave disappointments for Augustus that whittled down to his stepson, Tiberius Claudius Nero (born to Livia and her first husband in 42 BCE), as the only viable choice as heir.¹⁰ After Julia lost her powerful husband Agrippa in 12 BCE, Augustus compelled Tiberius to divorce and marry her. (Julia's conduct occasioned a crisis and her exile in 2 BCE, and once again Tiberius was forced to divorce.) Tiberius too received the *tribunicia potestas* (twice, on the second occasion definitively), and ultimately saw his powers defined at a level not far below those of Augustus.

Augustus' choice of his stepson Tiberius does seem to have come out of a process of elimination. When Augustus saw to his adoption in 4 CE, it came simultaneously with that of the hapless Agrippa Postumus (a son of Agrippa and Julia), and a heavy-handed attempt to determine succession also for the next generation. For Tiberius, though he had a natural son of his own, was ordered to adopt his nephew Germanicus, son of his brother, Drusus, who had died in 9 BCE. So at the end of the long and tumultuous process of establishing a succession plan, it was the progeny of Livia who came out on top.

Though it was the Senate that had voted Octavian the *cognomen* 'Augustus' in early 27 BCE, the emperor is said to have anticipated in late 9 CE that his adopted son Tiberius would inherit the name on his death as his successor. What is certain is that the phrase *domus Augusta* ("Augustan house") appears at just about that same time to designate the extended imperial family.¹¹ The formulation was clever, since *domus* to denote a family line conformed to established Republican use, but *Augusta* was an elastic term that embraced any member of his family whom he wanted to include.¹²

Augustus died on 19 August 14 CE, aged 76, at Nola in Campania, about 200 km from Rome. It was only in early September that he received funeral honors in the city, with cremation on the Campus Martius. Suetonius describes that at the event "there was even an ex-praetor who took an oath that he had seen the form of the Emperor, after he had been reduced to ashes, on its way to heaven."¹³ On 17 September, the Senate decided that Augustus was to be "consecrated," i.e., enrolled as a new deity among the gods of the state, as had been his adoptive father, Caesar. Led astray by the practice of his own day, Dio Cassius assumes that the vote had been taken before the funeral, and that the cremation was the context for Augustus' apotheosis. He describes the

ceremony with detail suitable to an imperial funeral in the third century, complete with the release of an eagle from the pyre, which “flew aloft, appearing to bear his spirit to heaven.”¹⁴

But where Dio seems trustworthy is his emphasis on the energetic role of Livia after the funeral. He tells us that Livia paid a million sesterces (= 250,000 *denarii*, evidently of her own money) to the ex-praetor who swore he saw Augustus ascending to heaven, and after keeping a vigil at the extinguished pyre for five days, she personally gathered up her husband’s bones and placed them in his mausoleum. Following a vote of the Senate, she and Tiberius built a temple to the deified emperor in Rome. The pair also “placed a golden image of him on a couch in the temple of Mars.” As one would expect, the consecration of Augustus as *divus* elevated still further the status of his household. Already within the reign of his successor Tiberius, the *domus Augusta* became known also as the *domus divina*.¹⁵

The Title Augusta

The terms of Augustus’ will contained a wholly novel provision that involved exploiting the name *Augustus* still further: the posthumous adoption of his wife Livia, henceforth to be known as ‘Julia Augusta.’ Observes Flory of the situation after Tiberius’ accession, “Livia now became . . . the intermediary—via her name—between dead father and living son.”¹⁶

The primary motive in granting this honor to Livia apparently was to support her son’s status as successor. Indeed, as Flory compellingly argues, subsequent use of *Augusta* in the Julio-Claudian period seems primarily aimed at conferring distinction on mothers (or in one case, a mother’s mother) of emperors. Antonia the Younger, who was grandmother of Caligula and mother of Claudius, refused the *cognomen* when Caligula offered it to her in 37. But after her death in that year he gave it to her as a title, and Claudius after succeeding his nephew Caligula as emperor in 41 confirmed it. That same year Claudius did not allow his wife Messalina to accept the title *Augusta* after the birth of their son, the later Britannicus, or at any time before her disgrace and death in 48. Yet when Claudius in 49 chose to wed Agrippina the Younger and adopted her son Nero, that woman obtained the *cognomen* for herself, the first to do so as the wife of a living emperor. There is every indication that the

primary purpose of the award was to mark Agrippina as the mother of the youth who was now the emperor's presumptive heir.

Claudius died in October 54, and Nero duly succeeded him, within five years of having his mother Agrippina the *Augusta* murdered. Later, in January 63, Nero lavished the title on both his new (second) wife Poppaea Sabina and their newborn daughter, Claudia, on the occasion of her birth as the emperor's first child. These grants of the title *Augusta* wholly broke with precedent, also in that they came at the same time and with no male heir yet in sight. (As it happened, Claudia was to die in infancy.)

Of the emperors who followed Nero in the tumultuous years 68–69, Galba exploited to the maximum his (tenuous) personal connection with the first *Augusta*, Livia. She had died in the year 29 and, after resistance by Tiberius, received divinization by Claudius in 42. The emperor Galba, who was at this point a widower, honored Livia on numerous types of silver and gold coinage minted in Rome as DIVA AVGVSTA, and on bronze as AVGVSTA. But neither he nor his successor Otho (also not married when made emperor) created an *Augusta* of their own. Vitellius took a different view, one based on the apparent core meaning of the distinction. He is said to have greeted his mother, Sextilia, as *Augusta* as soon as he entered the city of Rome to claim the principate, even before he properly had been made *Augustus* himself.¹⁷

So the Julio-Claudian emperors show a marked and sustained reluctance to allow the name *Augusta* to wives of child-bearing years. As Flory emphasizes, the point was to avoid at least the appearance of establishing inherited rule.¹⁸ One notes that Caligula did not bestow *Augusta* on any of his three wives; nor did Claudius allow it to (third) wife Messalina, the mother of his son Britannicus (lived 41–55); nor did Nero allow it to his first wife Octavia (married 54–62), who bore him no children.

But practice changed under the Flavian dynasty. Vespasian's wife Domitilla (the elder) and daughter Domitilla (the Younger) had each died before 69, when he replaced Vitellius on the throne. Though as emperor Vespasian paid no special honors to either Domitilla, his sons Titus (reigned 79–81) and Domitian (81–96) lost no time in aggrandizing the women of their family. Titus minted bronze coins at Rome in memory of his mother, Domitilla, and granted the title *Augusta* to his living daughter, Julia. His brother, Domitian, within weeks after his accession in 81, made his wife Domitia Longina also an *Augusta*. They

had produced a son together ca. 73, but he was no longer living. The marriage had its vicissitudes during Domitian's principate, including her public banishment and a later reconciliation, but she retained the title throughout. Not long afterward, perhaps as early as the year 82 but no later than the first months of 85, Domitian made one of the long-deceased women named Domitilla *Diva Augusta*—most probably his mother but just possibly his sister.¹⁹

So Titus and Domitian created three *Augustae* within a few short years, one deceased but two still of childbearing age (though with no living children), who indeed lived some years as contemporaries. Titus' daughter, Julia *Augusta*, was to die in 91. However, the other *Augusta*, Domitia Longina, lived to play a major role in the assassination of her husband, Domitian, in 96, seems to have received prominent honors from Trajan, and was still alive in 126, well into the principate of Hadrian.²⁰

Other Precedent-Setting Distinctions for Livia at Rome

The designation *Augusta*, initially meant to confer distinction on Livia as mother of Augustus' successor, was just one device that Rome's emperors employed to mark off the women of their families and envelope them in their own charismatic power.²¹ It is significant that other early approaches also foregrounded Livia's role of mother, as opposed to wife.²²

During his principate, Augustus did not feature his wife Livia explicitly on Rome's coinage. All the same, she enjoyed extraordinarily high personal visibility in Rome and environs, and at least the impression of relative autonomy.²³ But it was especially after the death of Livia's husband, in the reign of her son Tiberius, that the newly designated Julia Augusta accumulated additional prerogatives that ultimately established a firm foundation for the concept of an "empress" at Rome. Our ancient literary sources tell a story of Tiberius ostentatiously refusing honors for himself, resisting those for Livia, and seeing his tension-filled relationship with his mother spiral downward until her death in 29 CE, after which he is said to have hardened his attitude toward her still further. To be sure, Tiberius did not deify his mother. That honor came to her only under Claudius in the year 42 CE, soon after his succession to the principate. In making his grandmother a *diva*—on 17 January,

the anniversary of her marriage to Augustus—Claudius doubtless had an eye toward enhancing his own dynastic claims and legitimacy.²⁴

Yet the record shows that official adulation of Julia Augusta not just continued but greatly intensified after Tiberius' accession.²⁵ Public emotion evidently provided a stimulus for the creation of some of her honors, especially two unprecedented coin types issued in 22/23, one dedicated to her as *Augusta* and the other depicting her as the goddess *Salus*, the personification of health. The context is that Livia had fallen seriously ill, which we are told triggered elaborate vows for her safety; grave concern turned to joyous celebration upon her recovery. Yet it took another generation—namely, with the emperor Claudius' wife Agrippina the Younger—for living imperial women to start to appear regularly on the coins of Rome.²⁶

Ostentatious Honors for Livia/Julia Augusta in Italy and the Provinces

Outside Rome, honors for the wife of Augustus took much more extravagant forms. Most spectacularly, in both the west and east, Julia Augusta received the service of dedicated priesthoods—indeed, in her own lifetime. Let us first consider the municipalities of Italy and the Latin-speaking western provinces. Already in the early first century CE we find in the west the creation of priesthoods that tended the cult of the deified Augustus together with his wife. In the province of Hispania Baetica, we see priestesses devoted generally to the imperial family (*domus Augusta* or *domus divina*). But sometimes they looked after the worship of Julia Augusta alone.²⁷

This worship of Livia/Julia Augusta was to set an important precedent for subsequent practice in the west. In the first century CE, the *Augustae* Antonia the Younger (grandmother of Caligula and mother of Claudius) and Agrippina the Younger (wife of Claudius and mother of Nero) each received special priestesses, in the latter case certainly in her lifetime. Soon deification offered another path for obtaining cult. Caligula's sister Drusilla; Nero's wife Poppaea Sabina; Titus' daughter, Julia; and Domitian's sister, Flavia Domitilla, never received the distinction of *Augusta*, but on their deaths were deified, and in this way gained priestesses in Italy or the provinces. As it happens, "the priesthood of the imperial cult is by far the most widely attested public

function for women in the Latin west,” observes E. A. Hemelrijk. “By contrast, in the city of Rome no priestesses of the imperial cult have so far been found”—with the notable exceptions of Livia and Agrippina the Younger, who once widowed, themselves served as priestesses of their deified husbands.²⁸

The Greek east offers a startlingly different perspective on the organized popularity and power of Livia. Fortunately, U. Hahn has collected and analyzed the epigraphic and numismatic material dedicated to Livia from the east—which starts during Augustus’ own lifetime and indeed even before 27 BCE—as part of a comprehensive study of honors to imperial women in the Greek-speaking provinces through the empress Sabina.²⁹

Already in her husband’s lifetime, we find Livia receiving an array of distinctions that include divine honors. For example, at Athens she was introduced as a new goddess, and received a priestess who saw also to the cult of her stepdaughter, Julia; this creation can have been instituted no later than 2 BCE, the date of Julia’s disgrace and exile from Rome. Livia’s association with the divine is widely reflected on provincial coins. Pergamum joins the portraits on these two women on one of its issues, and assimilates Livia to Hera on the obverse and Julia to Aphrodite on the reverse. In Egypt, Alexandria also portrayed Livia on its coins, identifying her more simply as “wife of *Sebastos*,” i.e., Augustus. On occasion before 14 CE, certain communities even commemorate Livia herself as *Sebaste*, before her widowhood and reintroduction as Julia Augusta.³⁰

Like a Hellenistic queen, Augustus’ wife had cities named in her honor: Livionopolis in Pontus, and Livias in Judaea. So one can understand why the Thracian king Rhoemetalses I (who ruled 12 BCE–12 CE) took the propaganda at face value, and advertised his friendship with Rome by issuing coins with his image and that of his queen, Pythodoris, on the obverse, and conjoined heads of Augustus and Livia on the reverse. In his eyes, they were emperor and empress.³¹

Nor did the supposed growing hostility of Tiberius toward his mother in any way dampen enthusiasm for her cult in the Greek east. Rather, the volume of evidence for honors to Livia there is nothing short of staggering. For instance, in 26 CE Smyrna found itself contending with fully ten other cities in Asia Minor before winning the privilege to dedicate a temple jointly to Tiberius, Livia, and the Roman Senate.³² Examples of such official devotion are readily multiplied. The general

impression one gets from surveying the response of the eastern cities to Livia during the principate of her son Tiberius is an overheated contest in ingenious flattery among numerous contestants, great and small, across a range of media.

Consider simply the attempts in inscriptions or on coins to assimilate Livia explicitly to various goddesses, or in Hellenistic style to acclaim her the “new” identification of a deity—the vast majority apparently prior to her deification under Claudius.³³ Inscriptions from the east frequently designate Livia even in her lifetime as *thea* (“goddess”),³⁴ plus associate her with a dizzying range of divinities, encompassing all the principal goddesses of the Olympian Pantheon, especially Hera, Demeter, Artemis, Aphrodite, and Hestia. One notes that the same city might identify Livia with more than one divinity. In the Troad, Lampsacus honored the empress both as *Nea* (“New”) Demeter and Hestia; nearby Assos considers her *Nea* Hera as well as Aphrodite. Meanwhile, in Ephesus Livia received worship as Hera in addition to Demeter *Karpophoros* (the epithet means “fruit-bearing” or “fruitful”).

Once Rome’s earliest emperors had encouraged or allowed this level of adulation of Livia, there was no turning back. In the first century CE, comparison of imperial women to goddesses becomes customary. In the Julio-Claudian era, we find it for Caligula’s grandmother Antonia the Younger (identified as Demeter and Demeter *Karpophoros*), Caligula’s mother, Agrippina the Elder (Demeter, Hestia), and Caligula’s sister Drusilla (Demeter/Persephone, *Nea* Aphrodite); Claudius’ wives Messalina (Demeter) and Agrippina the Younger (Demeter, Artemis); and Nero’s wives Claudia Octavia (Demeter, Artemis), and Poppaea Sabina (Demeter). Under the Flavians, Vespasian’s daughter (and sister of the emperors Titus and Domitian), Flavia Domitilla, is assimilated to Tyche, and Domitian’s wife, Domitia Longina, is identified as both Demeter and *Nea* Hera. But none of these women received anything approaching the elaborate comparisons with deities accorded to Livia.

Deification of Imperial Women

Quite distinct from the phenomenon of establishing municipal cults for these imperial women, or honoring them as such-and-such a divinity,

is the process of divinization at Rome. It was only the Senate's formal vote that made Julius Caesar *divus* in 44 BCE, and Augustus in 14 CE; and that was the procedure used for women, too. Yet from the start the Senate's divinization of women had a random quality to it, with little relation to merit. The first to be elevated to *diva* was Drusilla (38 CE) in the reign of her brother, Caligula, and only afterward Livia (in 42, a full 13 years after her death) upon the accession of Claudius. Nero on succeeding his stepfather, Claudius, as emperor in 54 secured his divinization—but later deified his own infant daughter, Claudia (who died in 63), and then her mother, Poppaea Sabina, after her death in 65. Of these first four deifications of women, only that of Livia seems to have avoided a revulsion of feeling.

The Flavians, however, introduced a more systematic approach to deification, evidently aiming to place their new dynasty on the most secure footing possible. In 79 the dying Vespasian famously predicted his own creation as *divus*. His elder son and successor, Titus, duly obtained that for him, making Vespasian only the third emperor (after Augustus and Claudius) to reach that status. Succeeding Titus as emperor in 81, his brother, Domitian, in turn deified him, his sister, Flavia Domitilla, and his niece (and Titus' daughter), Julia, who died in 91. Henceforth deification of emperors and their family members became the norm.³⁵

Much more can be said of the various distinctions that Livia alone accumulated. Indeed, there are whole categories of honors for her and other women of the earlier imperial *domus* that, if properly discussed, would prevent us from ever arriving at our main subject, the Hadrianic era. Flattery of these women in literary sources, their inclusion in the state's oaths and prayers, their conspicuous positions at public spectacles, the official celebration of their significant anniversaries, the mass dissemination of their portrait busts and statues, the erection of temples and other buildings dedicated to their honor, the conduct of their funerals at public expense—all served as powerful, mutually reinforcing markers of their charisma and standing.³⁶

On the whole, the Julio-Claudian and Flavian women centered their presence on the city of Rome and immediate environs. Precisely how they turned their massive prestige into political influence and exercised patronage has been the subject of a number of specialized studies, and cannot occupy us here.³⁷ One thing that should be noted, however, is that the record of their travel abroad is not extensive. To

be sure, Livia accompanied her husband Augustus on his tour of the eastern provinces of 22–19 BCE, and also joined him in Gaul in the years 16–13 BCE. In late 17 or early 16 BCE, his daughter, Julia, traveled with her husband Agrippa to the east, where he remained until 13 BCE (and then died the next year in Campania). Agrippina the Elder is found with her husband, Germanicus, while he fought on the Rhine in the years 14–16 CE, and again on his eastern campaign that commenced in 17 and ended with his death at Antioch in the year 19. It was widely suspected that Germanicus had been murdered, with the Syrian governor Cn. Calpurnius Piso to blame. Holding her husband's ashes in an urn, Agrippina returned to Rome early the next year (20 CE). It was to mark the end of the last significant sojourn for an imperial woman to the provinces for some decades to come.³⁸

Still, the imperial women found a receptive audience also outside the city, especially among elite women. E. A. Hemelrijk argues that municipal Italy and the provinces allowed much more scope for women's activities, such as the holding of civic priesthoods, than was possible in the city of Rome. With these offices, women (like men) could display their loyalty to their own towns and the Roman imperial *domus*, all the while aggrandizing themselves in their communities. Enthusiasm ran so high in the west that there one finds municipal priestesses even of imperial women who had not been deified or ever named *Augusta*.

Hemelrijk offers the intriguing possibility that eventually provincial practice may have inspired imperial stylings, such as the "maternal titles" awarded to some of the empresses (*mater patriae* was suggested for Livia under Tiberius, but something like it was first realized only for Faustina the Younger in 174 CE). The notion of the provinces as incubators for innovation in dynastic representation makes sense, especially in view of the fact that "in Rome, emperors and empresses were worshipped only after their death and official deification, whereas in other cities of Italy and the provinces they also received cult during their lifetime."³⁹

Risks for Rome's Imperial Women

The prominence that the members of Rome's imperial family enjoyed had its own attendant dangers. For instance, as A. Barrett explains,

“rumours abounded in antiquity—as they did about other women of the imperial family—that Livia was given to eliminating her opponents by poison.” Her alleged victims included her step-grandchildren Lucius and Gaius Caesar (in 2 and 4 CE, respectively), her own husband Augustus in 14 CE, his one remaining grandson Agrippa Postumus that same year, Germanicus (by long-distance instructions) in 19—with further alleged plans to kill his widow, Agrippina, and her children. Tacitus in his narrative takes pains to portray Livia as an evil, manipulative schemer.⁴⁰

Notwithstanding these insinuations, Livia lived and died in honor. In the next generations to follow, subsequent empresses did not fare nearly so well. In the first century CE down to the accession of Trajan in 98, ten more women filled the role of wife of a living emperor. Only two of these emerged reasonably unscathed from the experience. In a way, the fact that Augustus was capable of exiling his own daughter and granddaughter, and Tiberius of causing the ruin of his own adoptive grandson, established a powerful precedent for future emperors who sought to address the real or perceived offenses of their family members.⁴¹

Consider the fate of Caligula’s various wives: Livia Orestilla, married (apparently) but soon repudiated in 37 or 38, then exiled in 40; Lollia Paulina, disowned in 39, and killed under his successor, Claudius in 49; and Milonia Caesonia, who was murdered together with Caligula and their daughter in 41. Claudius as emperor had his third wife, Valeria Messalina, killed in 48, with official erasure of her public memory (the so-called *damnatio memoriae*) to follow. Claudius’ fourth and final wife, Agrippina the Younger, survived her husband, only to be murdered on instructions of her own son, Nero, as emperor in 59. Nero’s treatment of his first wife, Claudia Octavia, whom he exiled and later murdered in 62, was heinous enough to excite popular protests. In 65 his second wife, Poppaea Sabina, died while pregnant; it was widely suspected that Nero had killed her by kicking her in the stomach. Nero took a third wife, Statilia Messalina, shortly afterward, in 66. She did manage to outlive her husband, who committed suicide in June 68.⁴²

The Imperial House from Galba through Domitian

So in the space of 30 years, fully seven of the eight empresses associated with the reigns of Caligula, Claudius, and Nero came to an

unfortunate end. Nero's demise, and with it, the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, did bring some respite to this spiraling series of dismal domestic events. The emperor Galba, who succeeded Nero and reigned for only seven months, had been a widower for decades, was childless, and so had no family to establish at Rome. Instead, as we have seen, Galba stridently advertised his connection with the deified Livia, now dead 40 years. Next on the throne was Otho, for three short months (mid-January to mid-April 69). Otho had once been married to Poppaea Sabina, whom Nero stole away to take as a lover and eventually wife; to strengthen his position as *princeps*, Otho apparently set his sights on marrying Nero's widow, Statilia Messalina. In the event, after Vitellius' forces handed him a pair of defeats on the Po river, he decided instead upon suicide and wrote to Statilia Messalina, commending to her care of his corpse and his memory. "Otho was evidently confident," says R. A. Bauman, "that Statilia was *persona grata* in all quarters."⁴³

As for Vitellius, he had a whole *domus Augusta* in place at the time of his accession in April 69. We have noted that he hailed his mother, Sextilia, as *Augusta* immediately on entering the city of Rome; at that time he was married for some years to one Galeria Fundana, and had a daughter and son (Germanicus, born to Galeria in 62). Yet Sextilia soon died, and Vitellius himself ruled for only eight months before being toppled by the eastern legions under the command of T. Flavius Vespasianus. Though Vespasian's troops on entering Rome killed the emperor (even mistreating his corpse), his brother, and his young son, they spared his wife (who saw to Vitellius' funeral) and his daughter. Indeed, Suetonius tells us that Vespasian, once emperor, took special care to find an illustrious husband for Vitellius' daughter, even providing her with a dowry and domestic necessities.⁴⁴

By the time of his accession (1 July 69), Vespasian himself had lost his wife, Flavia Domitilla, and a daughter, Flavia Domitilla, who had given him a granddaughter, also of the same name. But he had two grown sons, Titus (born in the year 39) and Domitian (born in 51), and as such was poised like no previous Roman emperor to found a dynasty of his own line. So as not to complicate matters of succession, it appears, Vespasian remained unmarried. Instead he openly maintained as a concubine the talented Antonia Caenis, a freed slave of Antonia the Younger (the daughter of Marc Antony and Octavia), who died in 37 CE. Though Caenis is said to have had great influence with Vespasian, she

received no special titles or honors, as the inscription on the funerary altar erected at her death, ca. 75, shows.⁴⁵

Titus for his part had been married twice by 69, with his first marriage—which evidently gave him his daughter, Julia—dissolved by death, and the second by divorce. He did not take another wife, either in his father's principate or in his own, which lasted from June 79 to his premature death in September 81. Titus did engage in a very public affair with the Jewish princess Julia Berenice, who arrived in Rome in 75. But the liaison stirred up bitter opposition among the Senate and People, to the extent that that it forced Titus to send her away on succeeding his father.⁴⁶

As for Titus' brother, Domitian, his domestic life revived memories of some of the worst elements of the later Julio-Claudian era. By the year 70 he had married Domitia Longina, daughter of the noted commander Domitius Corbulo, half-brother of Caligula's wife Milonia Caesonia, and a senatorial martyr under Nero. As we have noted, a son born to the couple in 73 died young. Not long after succeeding his brother as emperor in 81, Domitian named his wife *Augusta*, but then repudiated and exiled her, on the grounds of adultery with a famous actor. But he recalled Domitia, and there were even hopes—in the event, short-lived—for another child when she became pregnant in 90. To complicate matters, Suetonius tells us that Domitian as emperor had immersed himself in an incestuous relationship with his niece, Julia, whom her father Titus had made an 'Augusta.' This liaison came to a shocking end when Julia died following an abortion, sometime in the period 87–90; Domitian saw to her divinization. When the emperor's autocratic rule grew intolerable, Domitia Longina introduced another potent precedent for an empress—by encouraging and assisting the conspirators who assassinated him on 18 September 96. Domitia herself lived well into the reign of Hadrian, a living testament to an *Augusta's* capacity for retribution.⁴⁷

Trajan and the Imperial House

Nerva's Adoption of Trajan, and a Fresh Start for the Position of Empress at Rome

When it came to finding a successor for Domitian, it is telling that the Senate turned to M. Cocceius Nerva. Nerva was 65 years of age, unmarried, and childless. After his accession, Nerva set up an inscription renaming Domitian's 40,000 sq m Palatine complex as the *aedes publicae* ("public building"),¹ and no doubt opened up a greater part of it to rank-and-file Romans. The object was obviously to mark a break with his predecessor's despotic style. The fact that Nerva had no wife or family to install in it must have come as a relief following the excesses of Domitian's reign.

It was autumn 97 that saw Nerva's most famous act, the adoption of M. Ulpius Traianus (Trajan)—then a threatening presence as the commander of Upper Germany—and his immediate appointment as heir apparent. Though Nerva surpasses all previous Roman emperors in the specificity and stridency of the legends on his (readily dated) coins, tellingly he produced no issue to commemorate the adoption. This silence, and the fact that Trajan did not bother to take his adoptive father's family name, speak eloquently as to the circumstances of that decision, which Nerva is unlikely to have been able to contemplate at leisure. The adoption, even if forced, certainly was timely. On 27 January 98 Nerva died, and his designated successor, Trajan, established himself as *princeps* without open opposition.

One factor that represented a clear break with the past was the personal backgrounds of the new emperor and empress. Trajan (born 53) was from

the Spanish province of Baetica; his wife, Pompeia Plotina (born sometime before 70), very likely from Nemausus (modern Nîmes) in Narbonense Gaul. Their origins represented a dramatic enhancement of the status of provincial elites—none had ever reached the principate before—and as such marked a turning point for imperial Rome. Trajan and Plotina had no children. But they rapidly proved themselves adept at validating their own political rise and laying spectacular foundations for a true dynasty.

Plotina surely grasped the importance of the historical moment. On the one hand, she would have found a developed quasi-institutional structure in place for the wife of an emperor, with well-established titles and prerogatives. But it was a structure that still offered a great deal of latitude as regards public self-presentation. For the story of Rome's empresses in the seven decades since the death of Livia offered very little that positively required emulation. If anything, the saga of Rome's previous empresses presented a disturbingly long series of cautionary tales. An anecdote related by our summarizer of Dio Cassius suggests that Plotina in fact made a bit of political theater out of her transition from provincial senatorial nobility to imperial life on the Palatine in Rome. "When Plotina, [Trajan's] wife, first entered the palace, she turned around so as to face the stairway and the populace and said: 'I enter here such a woman as I would like to be when I depart.'" And indeed, explains this source, "she conducted herself during the entire reign in such a manner as to incur no censure."²

Trajan's Public Promotion of his Family: First Steps

Yet one of the hallmarks of Trajan's reign turned out to be the forceful aggrandizement of his family through the granting of lavish formal honors. It should not surprise us that Nerva, his adoptive father, received divine honors from the Roman Senate shortly after his death in 98; the same had been done for Vespasian and Titus. What is remarkable is that the emperor then elevated not just his wife, Plotina, but also his older sister, Ulpia Marciana, with the titles of *Augusta*. Marciana (who was born ca. 50, and widowed ca. 78) received that distinction perhaps as early as 100, Plotina by 105 at the latest.³ Soon, Trajan's provincial coins started to feature portraits of the two women on the reverse. At some point—probably following the conclusion of the Second Dacian War in 106—Trajan established a Marcianopolis in eastern Thrace in honor of his sister, which in

time became the chief city of the later province of Lower Moesia. Plotina for her part was commemorated by a Plotinopolis, in southern Thrace.⁴

Trajan and Plotina were childless, as we have noted, but his sister, Marciana, had a daughter named Salonia Matidia. And there resided hope in the Ulpian line (Figure 1). This Salonia Matidia was married twice, and had two known children. The first marriage was to a certain Mindius, a union that resulted in the birth of a daughter, also named Matidia. (In this work we shall frequently refer to the elder and younger Matidia as Matidia I and II.) Matidia I was remarried by the early 80s to a well-connected but not especially well-attested man named L. Vibius Sabinus; they are the parents of our Sabina, wife of Hadrian. The elder Matidia lived into the first years of her son-in-law Hadrian's principate, dying in late 119, "after a very long widowhood," as Hadrian himself noted in his eulogy for the woman, which has come down to us through an inscription from Tivoli. And Sabina's half-sister, Matidia II, lived for a further four decades past that (she was still alive in 161).⁵

Trajan took a consulship for the sixth (and, as it would happen, last) time in the year 112, after an interval of eight years. One of his first acts was to dedicate his monumental Forum complex in Rome (Figure 2). It

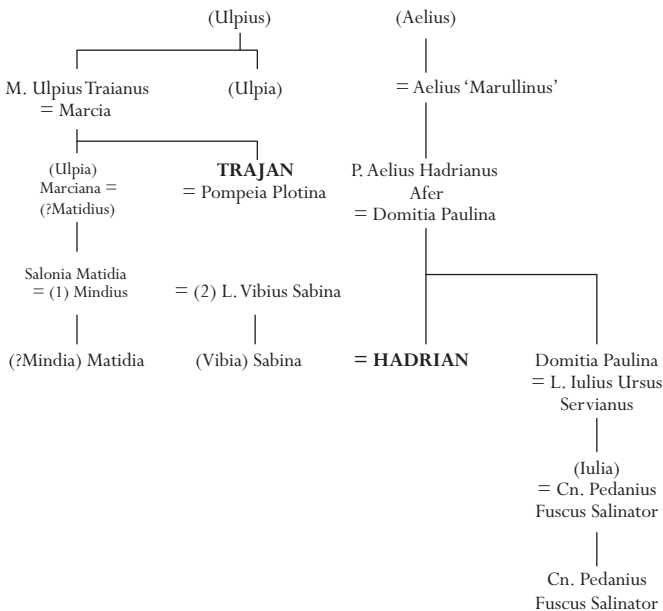


FIGURE 1. Hadrian's family connections.

Credit: T. C. Brennan

under Vespasian in 70, and governed the province of Asia under Titus in 79/80. Though the date of his death is unknown, it seems unlikely that he died precisely in the year 112, when he would have been at least in his mid-80s. Pliny in his *Panegyricus*, a speech that he addressed to Trajan in September 100, strongly implies that the emperor's father was no longer alive. Indeed, it is reasonable to presume that Trajan senior was deceased by October 97, when his son saw adoption by Nerva.

At any rate, what really matters is the fact of the deification, which is part of the emperor Trajan's project to consolidate and elevate the position of his family. The bold creation of a *Divus Pater Traianus* patently had two chief aims. One was to endow the emperor with parentage from two *divi*, namely, his adoptive father, Nerva, whom Trajan had deified as one of his first acts, and now his biological father as well. The emperor loudly equated the two on the reverses of two gold types, which show opposing busts of the fathers with the legend DIVI NERVA ET TRAIANVS PAT(er), and now he may have associated their cult statues as well. Another aim was to provide a parallel point of divine ancestry for his sister, Marciana *Augusta*; her daughter, Matidia (I) *Augusta*; and her granddaughters Sabina and Matidia the Younger.⁶

Marciana herself was to die in the year 112. But still, in her lifetime she was first presented on a coin minted at Rome, indeed, on the obverse. The legend accompanying her portrait reads MARCIANA AVG(usta) SOROR IMP(eratoris) TRAIANI ("Marciana Augusta, sister of the emperor Trajan"). Now, Caligula (notoriously) had depicted and identified his three sisters on the reverse of one of his bronze issues. But one notes that the word "soror" ("sister") had never before appeared on a Roman coin, nor would it ever again. And the reverse? There we find Trajan's titles, including COS VI, which dates the coin to January 112 or later. Then the legend MATIDIA AVG(ustae) F(ilia), "Matidia daughter of the *Augusta*"—the matronymic is unprecedented on a coin—with a female figure seated left on a throne, extending her right hand to a child standing at her knee, and laying her left hand on the head of another child standing beside her. The gender of the children is unclear. Still, the natural supposition is that the seated figure is Matidia I, and that the children are to be identified as Sabina and her sister, Matidia II. So on the face of things, the coin would seem to glorify three generations of women of Trajan's line, and on its reverse offer the earliest representation of our Sabina. But as we shall see, it is possible that this is

too literal an interpretation of the reverse, and that the scene should be read as a generic evocation of family respect and affection as a Trajanic imperial virtue.⁷

The Death of Marciana in 112

The startling “Trajan’s sister” issue forms part of a remarkable campaign of aggrandizement of the emperor’s family, starting with the deification of Trajan Pater in earliest 112. The latter part of that year saw the emperor engaged in a flurry of further such activity, focused on the women of his family. First, he saw to the deification of Marciana on the very same day as her decease, and named as *Augusta* her daughter (and his niece) Matidia the Elder. A marble calendar from Ostia preserves the date of these two acts, which fell on 29 August. It records also that there followed for Marciana on 3 September the most splendid type of public funeral. The term used is *funus censorium* (i.e., a funeral with distinctions proper to holders of the Republican senior office of the censorship), which almost certainly means that the corpse was dressed at least partly in purple. It must have helped that her father had already been proclaimed a god. Honors to the two women followed in the Greek east with impressive speed. For instance, within that same year the town of Lyttos in Crete seems to have dedicated a room in its council chamber to “Matidia Augusta, daughter of the deified Marciana, sister of emperor . . . Trajan.”⁸

Next came further promotion of the new *Augusta*, Matidia the Elder. We have already seen how a coin minted at Rome even before her mother Marciana’s death sought to highlight Matidia’s position as niece of the emperor and daughter of an *Augusta*. In the east, coins from Anazarbus in Cilicia, all dated to 113/114, feature Trajan on the obverse and each of the three *Augustae* on the reverse, in three denominations. The Trajan/Plotina coin has the highest value, then Trajan/Matidia, followed by Trajan/Marciana. At Mytilene on Lesbos, the obverse of a coin type shows busts of Matidia *Sebaste* and Plotina *Sebaste* facing each other. The suggestion here of official parity of Trajan’s two *Augustae* seems clear. Nor does this pose reflect mere sloganeering. It is telling that when the emperor set out for the east for his Parthian campaign in 113 (perhaps as early as May of that year), he took both his wife, Plotina, and niece, Matidia, and kept them in the east up until the time of his death in August 117.⁹

The divinization of Marciana also stimulated in 112 or earlier 113 a new series of Roman issues (four types, in gold, silver, and bronze), in which her daughter is proclaimed as MATIDIA AVG(usta) DIVAE MARCIANAE F(ilia), i.e., “Matidia Augusta the daughter of the deified Marciana” (Figure 3). On the obverse of the coins in question one finds a portrayal of Matidia the Elder with this explicit identification (and novel matronymic). On the reverse, where there is a legend, it is PIETAS AVG(usta) or AVGVST(a) (Figure 3). On one type, a standing female figure is engaged in sacrifice. On the others, a standing female figure on the reverse is touching the heads of two children. Surely the adult is Matidia the Elder, or this woman in the guise of the goddess Pietas (“Piety”). And again it is generally supposed that the children are Sabina and Matidia the Younger. What gives grounds for skepticism about the identification of the young women is that there exists bronze coinage from the period after 128 CE with Sabina on the obverse and the standing figure of Pietas Augusta on the reverse, in a similar pose as the “Matidia” issue, with two small children—but in this case it is a girl and a boy. This pose certainly problematizes the earlier coin issues. And this reverse type saw subsequent use, in the mid-third century CE.¹⁰

Finally, a word about Trajan’s public promotion of his wife, Plotina, on the coinage. We have seen that dated provincial coins (from Cilician Anazarbus) hailed her as *Augusta* by 107/108. But it was not until the banner year 112 that Plotina found a place on Rome’s coinage. Then



FIGURE 3. Rome mint: *aureus* of Matidia I (112 CE) = RIC II (Trajan) 759. Obverse legend: MATIDIA AVGVSTAE DIVAE MARCIANAE F Reverse: PIETAS AVGVSTAE.

Credit: Classical Numismatic Group, from sale Triton XIX lot 533 5 January 2016

appears an elaborate series of issues, all with the date of Trajan's sixth consulship (i.e., 112) as a terminus. Each features a portrait of Plotina on the obverse, in most cases identified by her own title and her husband's name: PLOTINA AVG(usta) IMP(eratoris) TRAIANI ("Plotina Augusta, wife of emperor Trajan"). The reverses vary greatly, with some unprecedented scenes and legends advertising imperial qualities. In one instance, a laureate head of Trajan appears on the obverse, while on the reverse busts of the deified Nerva and Plotina Augusta are placed in regard. The cumulative message here is of family legitimacy, solidarity and continuity, integrity of the marriage, and partnership between husband and wife in the larger aims of the principate.¹¹

As we shall see, Hadrian as emperor was to continue the policies of his predecessor with respect to the imperial family, seeing to the deification of Trajan (by 118), Salonia Matidia (Matidia I) (after her death in 119), and Trajan's wife, Plotina (after 122/123). The upshot of all this was that Sabina and her half-sister by the mid-120s found themselves in a remarkable position, simultaneously as great-granddaughters, granddaughters, daughters, and grandnieces of gods. We are entitled to ask how this highly elevated status shaped the formation of Sabina's own identity and her standing as empress, and contributed to her own deification. It is to the question of Sabina's personal background and basic life narrative to which we shall now turn.

Sabina's Personal History

The elements of the intertwined story of Trajan, Hadrian, and Trajan's grandniece Sabina are rooted in the wealthy Roman province of Hispania Baetica (which corresponds roughly to modern Andalusia in south central Spain) and the local aristocracy of its chief city, Italica.¹ This city, whose site lies near Seville, was the home of both Trajan and Hadrian. They were born a full generation apart, in the years 53 and 76 CE, respectively. The two men were each sons of Roman senators, and related, as cousins once removed. Trajan and Hadrian each had an elder sister, whose names were (Ulpia) Marciana and (Aelia) Domitia Paulina, respectively. This circumstance will prove another important element in the story.

Family Ties between Trajan, Hadrian, and Sabina

The crucial family link has to do with Hadrian's grandfather. He was a senator who took as his wife the sister of Trajan's father, a woman whose name was Ulpia. Now, Trajan's father, M. Ulpius Traianus, was the first in his line to reach the Senate, but he enjoyed a prominent military and political career. He had charge of a legion in the Jewish War in the years 66–68, under the general command of the future emperor Vespasian, and he was likely present in Egypt in summer 69, when Vespasian was acclaimed emperor by his troops in Alexandria.

Once emperor, Vespasian elevated Trajan senior to patrician status and (in summer 70) to Rome's highest regular office, the consulship, as suffect (i.e., substitute). Soon afterward the emperor appointed him

to governorships of Hispania Baetica (72/73) and of Syria (73–76); the younger Trajan accompanied his father to at least the eastern province. The elder Trajan's brilliant career culminated with a year as governor of the province of Asia (79/80). His son, Trajan, advanced a bit more slowly through the career path than one would expect for a patrician in this era, though he was appointed to an ordinary consulship (i.e., the most prestigious form of Rome's top magistracy) in 91.

The activities of Hadrian's grandfather and father are less conspicuous to us. The father's name was P. Aelius Hadrianus Afer, and he advanced far enough in his political career to receive the second-highest regular magisterial rank in the state, that of the praetorship. His wife, Domitia Paulina, was also from Hispania Baetica, a native of Gades (modern Cádiz). Hadrian himself is said to have been born in Rome, on 24 February 76. But his father surely kept close contact with his native Italica in Baetica. For we are told that when he died around the year 85 (aged 40), the younger Trajan was one of two men to take over the care of his children, or at least his son, the future emperor. The other guardian was also from Italica: the equestrian P. Acilius Attianus, who later held the position of praetorian prefect in Trajan's last years and the first ones of Hadrian.²

In 91, the young Hadrian is said to have returned briefly to Italica, but soon thereafter to have embarked on his military career. A bilingual (Greek and Latin) inscription from Athens survives that details Hadrian's early offices from ca. 94 onward,³ and many of the facts preserved there plainly have informed the emperor's biography that has come down to us in the *Historia Augusta* collection. Very shortly, we shall have occasion to discuss the nature of that work.

One important highlight was the year 97, which found Hadrian as tribune of a legion in the province of Lower Moesia (which encompassed territory in modern Bulgaria and Romania). It was in this capacity that he was sent to Trajan in Germania Superior (which sprawled across portions of Switzerland, France, and Germany) to offer his army's official congratulations on the adoption by Nerva. Another high point came in early 98, when, as the *Historia Augusta* relates, Hadrian had to compete with his own brother-in-law, L. Iulius Ursus Servianus (married to Hadrian's sister, Domitia Paulina, and now a legionary legate in Germania Superior), for the distinction of first announcing the news of Nerva's death to Trajan. Hadrian overcame various obstacles set in his path—which included a sabotaged carriage—to beat Servianus'

personal messenger in a race to Trajan at Colonia Agrippinensis (Cologne).⁴

Everything was to change for the Ulpian family and its circle when Trajan reached the throne in 98. Trajan, we are told, had treated Hadrian “like a son” after his brief sojourn at Italica at age 15, and held him in the highest affection. Yet Hadrian’s own brother-in-law, Servianus, sought to undermine the relationship of the two by his ambitious maneuvers at the time of Trajan’s accession. Indeed, from the start Hadrian had reason to be concerned whether he was indeed destined as the new emperor’s successor. The *Historia Augusta* reports the rumor that Hadrian, to gain access and influence with the emperor, corrupted the imperial freedmen and cultivated the young boys whom Trajan had taken on as *delicati* (i.e., erotic playthings), even to the point of sexual contact. Elsewhere, the *Historia Augusta* states as fact that the minders of those boys stood in the way of Hadrian’s designs.⁵

But we learn that support at Trajan’s court came to Hadrian from a trusted favorite of the emperor, the Spanish consular L. Licinius Sura, who hailed from the largest of the Iberian provinces, Tarraconensis. And Hadrian soon found himself bound to Trajan by a new connection. For Hadrian “took as his wife a niece of Trajan through his sister, with Plotina in favor, but Trajan not readily willing—as Marius Maximus says.”⁶ Marius Maximus was a senatorial biographer of the late second and early third centuries (he was suffect consul in 198 or 199), who remained very much in vogue among Rome’s elites in the latter half of the fourth century. It is the first mention we find of that authority in the *Historia Augusta*, about whom we shall have more to say, in Chapter 4.

For Hadrian’s wife, even some of the most basic facts are hazy. In official contexts she is invariably called Sabina; it takes some spadework to discover the fuller form of her family name, Vibia Sabina. Her ancestry in the maternal line is one thing that is clear: great-granddaughter of Trajan’s consular father, M. Ulpius Traianus (himself maternal uncle to Hadrian’s father), and granddaughter of Trajan’s elder sister, Ulpia Marciana (born ca. 50, widowed ca. 78, and died 112).

Her parents and siblings? As we have seen, Sabina’s mother, Salonia Matidia, was married by the early 80s to one L. Vibius Sabinus. Sabina was her second child: the mother had a prior marriage to a certain Mindius, in a union that resulted in the birth of a daughter, also named Matidia.⁷ About Sabina’s father not much is known other than his name (L. Vibius C.f. Sabinus, and even that has to be pieced together from

several sources), a likely political relationship (to P. Arrius Antoninus, a distinguished senior consular of the mid-first century CE who was a strong adherent of Nerva), senatorial rank, and death. That came soon after he reached a suffect consulship in (so it seems) the event-filled year 97, the autumn of which saw the new emperor Nerva compelled to adopt Trajan as his heir.⁸

Sabina's date of birth? It can only be approximated, and even then by making a string of inferences. As we have noted, Hadrian was born in the year 76, to a senatorial family (like that of Trajan's) of Italo-Spanish descent. Sabina is generally thought to have been born in the mid-80s, and so would be about a decade younger than her husband. But that is merely a guess based on the date of their marriage, which apparently came soon after Trajan's succession of Nerva as emperor in January 98. It is generally placed around the year 100, just before Hadrian took up the entry-level magistracy of the quaestorship. On this line of reasoning, Sabina's age at marriage would have been around 15 years. A horoscope of Hadrian that found its way into the astrological manual of Antigonus of Nicaea (second century CE) indeed states that "he was married to one wife from the time she was a maiden and was childless."⁹ But the chronology offered here rests on nothing more than informed speculation.

Sabina's place of birth? Unknown: the likeliest possibilities are Baetica, or Rome and its environs. Life before Hadrian's accession? If we leave aside the debate about their marriage, nothing of her first 30 years or so is recorded by the literary sources. Nor do the inscriptions offer anything ironclad.¹⁰ This uncertainty is a real pity, since there is much one would like to know, including Sabina's whereabouts in August 117 when Hadrian, in command of the Roman province of Syria, received word of his adoption by Trajan as a dying act. It should be noted that Sabina's mother, Matidia I, was in Cilicia with her uncle Trajan at the time, and so perhaps Sabina was with her husband, Hadrian. But again, this is all guesswork.

The sources do yield some crucial facts that provide for us some chronological tethers that will help us reconstruct the empress's public career, as we shall attempt to do in some detail in Chapters 6–10. One clue is that Sabina received the charismatic title of *Augusta* in 128, in coordination with her husband's designation in that year as *pater patriae* ("Father of his Country"). A second point: it is certain that Sabina accompanied Hadrian on her husband's third and final great

journey. We have spectacular proof, including first-person graffiti, that places her at Egyptian Thebes in November 130. That proof suggests that Sabina participated in the emperor's entire eastern tour, which spanned from 128 to perhaps early 133.

A third chronological point: we know that Sabina lived to see Hadrian adopt one of the consuls of the year 136, L. Ceionius Commodus (henceforth known as L. Aelius Caesar), who died on 1 January 138. And a fourth: it was Hadrian who saw to a supreme honor for Sabina—her deification—after her death. So Sabina predeceased her husband by no more than 20 months or so, and very probably (as we shall see) no more than eight. We can also locate the final resting place of her ashes: the imposing mausoleum that her husband had built on the west bank of the Tiber, known today as the Castel Sant'Angelo. In later 139 Hadrian's second adopted son and his successor, Antoninus Pius, was to dedicate that monument to the deified Sabina and the not-yet deified Hadrian as "his parents."

Sabina in the Literary Sources: The Epitomators

Unfortunately, we have to wait several generations after Hadrian's reign for what is ostensibly the first mention of Sabina in a literary text. It comes in the account from early third century CE of the senatorial historian Dio Cassius (consul in 229), whose Book 69 treats the reign of Hadrian. That book, like most of Dio's narrative of the Roman imperial period, has come down to us only in a hit-and-miss epitome from the middle Byzantine period, compiled in the 11th century. Hadrian had married Trajan's niece, we are told at the beginning of this book's narrative. No name is offered, and she never appears again in the Dio epitome.¹¹ For all its failings, the Byzantine summary of Dio Cassius Book 69 still must be counted as our most sober, reasonably detailed account of this principate. So the epitomator's almost complete lack of interest in whatever Dio had to say about Sabina comes not just as a major disappointment, but also a positive impediment to our study.

The next historical narratives on Hadrian are no earlier than the second half of the fourth century. First, let us consider two Latin epitomators. Around the year 360 the senator Aurelius Victor authored a compact account of Rome's emperors from Augustus to Constantius II (337–361); the work is generally known as the *Caesares* or *Liber de*

Caesaribus. Here he sums up the combined 40-year reign of Trajan and Hadrian in 27 brief sentences. Victor finds space to mention a rumor that Trajan's wife, Plotina, had forged the emperor's will (i.e., in 117) to institute Hadrian as heir. He also is fulsome on the figure of Antinoös, devoting to him a full quarter of his sketch of the emperor, though he accompanied Hadrian for no more than two years before meeting his death in Egypt in October 130. On the other hand, Aurelius Victor altogether omits Sabina.¹²

More helpful for our inquiry is the later (anonymous) *Epitome de Caesaribus*, whose chronological scope extends down to the death of the emperor Theodosius I in 395. This work draws to a certain extent on Aurelius Victor for the emperors down through Nerva, but thereafter on other sources (precisely which ones is much debated). The treatment of Trajan and Hadrian is about the same length as that in Aurelius Victor, but significantly different in content and markedly more detailed. The author is one of precisely two sources to note, for instance, the crucial fact that Hadrian's father was a cousin of Trajan, and so Hadrian was Trajan's first cousin once removed.¹³

Sabina gets two sentences in this *Epitome*, about a tenth of the Hadrian section. The author identifies Hadrian's wife by name, and ascribes a remark to her, the only one any of our literary sources offers. It is a startling statement regarding her husband, clearly after his accession as emperor. Sabina "used to boast openly," we are told, "because she had ascertained his nature was monstrous, that she had taken pains not to become pregnant by him, which would be to the hazard of the human race." It does underline what we might otherwise presume, that Hadrian and Sabina had no surviving children of their own. But there is more. "While she was laboring under affronts almost appropriate for a slave, she was compelled to commit suicide."¹⁴

The Historia Augusta

Many questions suggest themselves, but for the moment let us press on. Our least stingy literary source on Sabina is the *Life of Hadrian*, which has come down to us as the first installment of the collection known today as the *Historia Augusta*. It is an incomplete set of biographies of emperors, heirs, and usurpers that extends from Hadrian down to

Numerianus and Carinus (i.e., the years 284 and 285). The *Historia Augusta* is purportedly the work of six (otherwise unknown) authors; one Aelius Spartianus is credited with the biographies of Hadrian and also his prematurely deceased heir, L. Aelius Caesar. The latter is dedicated to Diocletian, the emperor who reigned 284–305. Under the name of Spartianus in the *Historia Augusta* are also biographies of Didius Julianus (193) and the contemporary pretender Pescennius Niger (193/194), then Septimius Severus (193–211) and his sons Caracalla (co-emperor or emperor 198–217) and Geta (co-emperor 209–211). The last of those *Lives* contains a dedication to the emperor Constantine, who ruled 312–337.

But these dedications to Diocletian and Constantine (which occur also in other *Lives*) are misleading—indeed, intentionally so—for the actual authorship and date of the *Historia Augusta*. Long ago H. Dessau showed to a high degree of plausibility that the collection is almost certainly the work of a single writer, pretending to be six different authorities. Dessau also pointed out some glaring chronological difficulties in the work, including that the life of Septimius Severus demonstrably draws on the *Caesares* of Aurelius Victor. So at a minimum that Life (credited to our Aelius Spartianus), and by extension the entire compilation, must postdate the year 360. A broad scholarly consensus has now placed the *Historia Augusta* in the last decades of the fourth century or even slightly later. But nothing positively obligates us to assume a date later than ca. 385.¹⁵

Dessau's demonstration that the *Historia Augusta* contains major fabricated elements has in turn prompted much speculation on its purpose. A. Cameron has offered the most straightforward and least problematic suggestion. First, he places the work in the decade 374–382/383, before Ammianus Marcellinus published his own history of the period from Nerva to his own day. Cameron also rejects the commonly voiced notion that the author of the *Historia Augusta* needed to conceal his identity because of his ideological or religious outlook (which in any case is opaque). Instead, Cameron argues that the author perhaps simply intended to continue (and supplant) Marius Maximus, the senatorial biographer of the late second and early third centuries. "But faced with the scarcity of sources after Maximus," states Cameron, ". . . he gave ever freer rein to his powers of invention," with the biographies of the emperors from Aurelian (reigned 270–275) to Carinus (died 285) descending into wild fiction.¹⁶

Yet for the emperors from Hadrian to Caracalla, the author of the *Historia Augusta* at least theoretically had access to good information. And his *Life of Hadrian* is generally regarded as the most sober of the bunch. As we shall see, the author claims to use Hadrian's own autobiography as a source. He certainly relates some solid facts, especially on the offices Hadrian held before his accession and also on his various building projects when emperor. For instance, the *Historia Augusta* is the only ancient literary source that properly credits Hadrian with the construction of his famous wall in Britain.¹⁷

So what does the *Historia Augusta* tell us about Sabina? She is listed as Hadrian's spouse at practically the very start of the *Life*. Then comes that item on the dispute over her betrothal, a unique report that even names a source. Citing Marius Maximus, this work pointedly tells us that Trajan's wife, the empress Plotina, herself arranged the marriage. But her husband, Trajan, cared little for his "niece" being matched with Hadrian.¹⁸

After a rather detailed treatment of Hadrian's early career, the circumstances of his accession, and the first years of his reign, the biography of Hadrian then offers a puzzling incident in the couple's marriage that names two especially prominent members of his upper administration. Because they had "conducted themselves with Sabina in a more familiar manner than reverence for the imperial house demanded," Hadrian is said to have replaced his correspondence secretary, Suetonius Tranquillus, and praetorian prefect Septicius Clarus—both noted literary figures—as well as "many others." It is generally supposed from its context in the *Historia Augusta* *Life* that this incident took place around the year 122, at the time of the emperor's military expedition to Britain. We shall examine this question in Chapter 6.¹⁹

The *Historia Augusta* then follows this notice with two items. One is Hadrian's assessment of Sabina's personality. The emperor used to say, we are told, that he found her "ill-tempered and irritating, and would have sent her away had he been a private citizen." In other words, Hadrian openly admitted that he stayed married to Sabina solely for dynastic reasons. The other is a description of the efficacy of Hadrian's spy network, which was "not confined to his own household."²⁰

So far we have seen in the *Historia Augusta* the bare facts of Sabina's ancestry, marriage, a scandal, and her husband's harsh assessment of her personality. There is also the implication that he spied on her. The work offers nothing more on Sabina, except the alleged circumstances

of her death. We are told that toward the end of his life, an ailing Hadrian suspected his brother-in-law, Servianus, though now a nonagenarian, of aiming at the throne, and so forced his suicide “and killed many others either openly or by stealth.” The author then offers a specific example: “indeed seeing that even his wife Sabina died, not without the report of poison administered by Hadrian.” Then, an apparent chronological marker: “at that point Hadrian decided to adopt Ceionius Commodus, son-in-law of a one-time conspirator Nigrinus, since his beauty appealed to him. For this reason, though all were opposed, he adopted Ceionius Commodus Verus and named him Aelius Verus Caesar.”²¹

Now, L. Ceionius Commodus was ordinary consul for the year 136. His adoption by Hadrian very probably dated to early in the second half of that year. The *Historia Augusta* certainly errs in calling this man ‘Verus’; rather, the name belongs to his son, co-emperor with Marcus Aurelius from 161 to his death in 169. As we shall see in Chapter 5, this account is surely mistaken in its chronology of Servianus’ forced suicide (which should be placed in the very last months of Hadrian’s reign), and it also must be wrong in its implied placement of the death of Sabina. Hadrian’s wife and the newly created heir, ‘L. Aelius Caesar,’ received joint honors in life, before the latter died on 1 January 138. One notes, however, that the *Epitome de Caesaribus* had a similar claim regarding Sabina’s death, that she was forced to suicide.

Additional Sources on the Life of Sabina

The fact that Hadrian married Trajan’s (grand-)niece does seem to have been well known, even in later antiquity. John Malalas in his *Chronography* (composed after 563) remarks that at the time Hadrian joined Trajan on his Parthian campaign of 113–117, he was already a relative by marriage to the emperor “through his sister.”²² The remaining scraps we possess are more difficult. For the period after Hadrian’s accession, we have a purported letter from the emperor to his mother that mentions Sabina, but found in a very miscellaneous source that dates to the third or even fourth century CE. Plus four separate literary sources, ranging from the late fourth to the ninth centuries, register that Hadrian’s wife (no name given) received the title *Augusta*—which we know from the coins and inscriptions—but offer three different

dates for the honor. These latter items raise enough problems that we shall defer detailed discussion to Chapter 6.

It would be highly misguided to think that one could write an actual biography of Sabina from the above material, which essentially can be defined as a few passing notices in literature and a collection (albeit a massive one) of highly stylized representations. The literary sources are extremely scant and incidental, with one of our two most important historical narratives for the reign of Hadrian altogether omitting mention of Sabina by name. In the few places where we do get judgments of her actions and character, the tone is stunningly negative. Even with all the literary and nonliterary sources taken together, we can be sure only of a few bare facts. So one is hard pressed to understand even the most basic outlines of what Sabina did and how contemporaries regarded her, never mind the workings of her internal life.

But there is one confirmed aspect of Sabina's career that gives pause and fires the historical imagination. It is that Sabina accompanied her husband at least on the last of his great journeys through the empire, the eastern tour that started in 128 and stretched perhaps a full five years. Sabina was to become the most traveled and visible empress that Rome had ever known. And chance survivals from that tour, especially from Egypt, shed significant light on something more than her official personality.

Hadrian's Personality

Hadrian's Career down through His Accession

“Hadrian is sharply distinguished from the other emperors not only by the character of his administration,” observed his biographer W. D. Gray almost a century ago, “but also by the quality which we call ‘personality’. . . [H]e was forty-one years old when he came to the throne; that is, the essential traits of his character had been determined before he began to rule.” We are surprisingly well informed on the career of Hadrian prior to his accession (which is as far as Gray got in his published work). As we have noted in Chapter 3, the Latin portion of a bilingual inscription from Athens details Hadrian’s early offices (through the year 108), and confirms in its essentials what the *Historia Augusta* biography of the emperor offers for this period.¹

As it happens, Hadrian’s public career spanned the reigns of three emperors: the last two or three years of Domitian (81–96), and the entire principates of Nerva (96–98) and Trajan (98–117). Starting around the year 96 and for the next two decades, Hadrian saw some significant stretches of prominent military service. Rome’s Rhine and (especially) Danubian provinces played a central role in his formation. During Nerva’s reign, Hadrian was a senatorial military tribune for three different legions, based respectively in Upper Germany, Pannonia, and Lower Moesia. Under Trajan, he distinguished himself in the first of the Dacian Wars (101–102), commanded a legion in the second (105–106), and, following these campaigns, received a praetorian command of Lower Pannonia, which he held (probably) into the year 108.

At this point, Hadrian and Sabina would have been married eight or nine years—though living apart for at least half that time. At the time of their marriage ca. 100, Hadrian was 23 or 24 years old, Sabina quite younger, perhaps by a full decade. It is a mark of Hadrian's subsequent success and favor that the signal honor of a suffect consulship came to him in May 108, when he was just 32. In this era, non-patricians such as he ordinarily had to wait much longer for this top office—indeed, usually until the statutory minimum age, which was 42.

The next firm date attached to the career of Hadrian is 112—Trajan's sixth and final consulship, which was so momentous for the consolidation and further elevation of the Ulpian dynasty. It seems that Hadrian—and most probably Sabina—missed the celebrations in Rome. For Hadrian is attested in that year in Athens, as part of an extended sojourn in Greece in a private capacity. The outlines of that journey to Greece emerge with reasonable clarity. First, Hadrian must have traveled to Nicopolis in Epirus to hear the lectures of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus. The evidence for Hadrian's visit to the philosopher there is complex and essentially circumstantial, but cumulatively compelling. A. R. Birley attractively makes the case that it was now, under Epictetus' influence, that Hadrian decided to grow his distinctive Greek-style beard.²

Next came residence at Athens. The Athenians esteemed Hadrian enough to vote him citizenship, and make him eponymous archon—the city's chief magistracy—in either 111/112 or 112/113. (Birley argues for the latter.) Whatever the precise date, it was on the occasion of the archonship that the important inscription recording Hadrian's earlier offices was set up at Athens, in an especially conspicuous position, on a statue base placed in the middle of the first row of seats of the Theater of Dionysus. An honorary inscription to Hadrian, as a private citizen, from Coroneia in nearby Boeotia hints at his further explorations in Old Greece.³

Hadrian—accompanied, we may guess, by Sabina—was still in Greece when he received the call in 113 to join Trajan on his Parthian campaign, first as a legate and eventually (by 117) as governor of the crucial province of Syria. Trajan seems to have slated him for a second consulship in 118. But everything changed on or about 8 August 117, when the emperor, now ailing and making his way back to Rome from the Parthian front, died at Selinus on the coast of western Cilicia (modern Gazipaşa in Turkey). Hadrian was at his provincial capital of

Antioch, 560 km to the east, when he is said to have received in rapid succession the announcement first (on 9 August) of his adoption by Trajan, followed two days later by the news of his death. As we shall see in Chapter 5, the chronology of those dispatches certainly raised contemporary suspicions. But the powerful army based in Syria had no hesitation in acclaiming Hadrian as emperor on the very day he learned of and reported Trajan's demise.

Hadrian soon traveled west to Cilicia "to inspect the remains of Trajan," as the *Historia Augusta* has it. Now heading the imperial entourage were the two *Augustae*, Plotina and Sabina's mother, Matidia I (who surely first came with Trajan to the east in 113), and one of the two praetorian prefects, P. Acilius Attianus of Baetica, who had once shared with Trajan the role of guardian for the young Hadrian. So close were their ties to Hadrian that Plotina and Attianus were widely thought to have faked the adoption to ensure his succession. Hadrian sent the three (and of course Trajan's corpse) back to Rome on a ship, and returned to Antioch to make arrangements for the command of the Syrian province. Starting in late September or early October 117, the new emperor then made his way overland to Rome, northwest through Anatolia, and then heading toward the Danubian provinces.⁴

While en route to Rome, Hadrian is said by the *Historia Augusta* to have written a letter to the Senate in which he apologized for accepting the acclamation of his troops rather than first letting that body decide on the succession. Here he also asked that Trajan be voted divine honors. "This request he obtained by a unanimous vote," reports the biographer. "Indeed, the Senate voluntarily voted Trajan many more honors than Hadrian had requested."

Relations with the Senate soon soured, before Hadrian even set foot in Italy. For a start, Hadrian unilaterally had decided to abandon Trajan's territorial gains east of the Euphrates. There were no half-measures or gradualism: Hadrian swiftly decommissioned the grandiose new provinces of Armenia (formally organized in 114), Mesopotamia, and Assyria (both 116), and withdrew support from the puppet king whom his predecessor had created for the Parthians. Part of the background to this decision must have been the revolts popping up elsewhere throughout the empire—Judaea, Egypt, Cyrenaica, Mauretania, Dacia, eventually even Britain. Indeed, faced with fierce unrest on the middle Danube, Hadrian on his journey homeward felt compelled to intervene in the Moesian provinces and make emergency arrangements for Dacia

(which he ended up reorganizing, though Trajan had just created the province in 106) and Pannonia.

But what caused the deepest rift between Senate and *princeps* was Hadrian's perceived role in the execution—a better term would be assassination—of four ex-consuls deemed “conspirators.” All four had enjoyed considerable public prominence under Trajan: A. Cornelius Palma (*cos. ord.*, or ordinary consul, 99 and II 109, who as governor of Syria in 106 had annexed Arabia Petraea as a province); C. Avidius Nigrinus (*cos. suff.*, or suffect consul, 110, and now serving as governor of Dacia); L. Publilius Celsus (less well attested, but *cos. ord.* II 113); and the Mauretanian military man Lusius Quietus (*cos. suff.* 117, whom Hadrian had just dismissed from his governorship of Judaea). They were put to death more or less simultaneously, all but Lusius apparently in their individual villas outside the city, each without trial in the Senate and before the new emperor had come to Rome.

The *Historia Augusta* reports that Nigrinus, “whom he actually intended as his successor,” Lusius, and unnamed others had plotted to have Hadrian killed as he was sacrificing. (We do not learn where.) So the four consulars were killed, continues this source, “on the orders of the Senate and against Hadrian’s wishes, as he himself says in his *Autobiography*.” So Hadrian adamantly wished to absolve himself of responsibility, and tried to shift blame onto the Senate itself. Elsewhere, this source says Hadrian was in the habit of diverting the responsibility “onto the designs of Attianus,” his former tutor, whom he inherited from Trajan as praetorian prefect. Indeed, the *Historia Augusta* alleges that Hadrian found Attianus so powerful that he wanted to kill him, too, and would have, had the execution of the consulars not prompted such a stir.

There is no telling precisely what caused the demise of the four victims, but they may have been no more than agnostics on the fact of the adoption, hostile to the new frontier policies, or both. Perhaps it really was Attianus who secured a formal decree of the Senate to deal with a purported crisis. The *Historia Augusta* further represents him as writing to Hadrian “in the first days of his rule” with a list of other senators to kill, whom the emperor kindly spared. Indeed, it is a commonplace in our ancient literary sources that the reign of Hadrian opened—and closed—with murders.⁵

Once Hadrian had finally arrived in Rome—on 9 July 118—the new emperor made an ostentatious show of moderation. Over and above

staging a macabre (and quite unprecedented) posthumous triumph for Trajan, Hadrian “refused for the present the title of Father of his Country [*pater patriae*], offered to him at the time of his accession and again later on, giving as his reason the fact that Augustus had not won it until late in life” (i.e., in 2 BCE, after 25 years as *princeps*). The emperor also replaced both praetorian prefects—but in the case of Attianus, had him inscribed in the rolls of the Senate, with insignia at the consular rank. This act was to have the primary effect of cementing perceptions of a nefarious link between the emperor and his former tutor, both in regard to the adoption and the brutal quashing of senatorial dissent.

For the new praetorian prefects, Hadrian in 119 appointed to hold one of the positions a trusted military man, Q. Marcius Turbo, whom he had already employed in rapid succession in Mauretania and on the Danube. The other was C. Septicius Clarus, known to us only from his participation in Rome’s highest literary circles: Pliny the Younger dedicated his *Letters* to him (at least the first installment) and Suetonius, in a preface now lost, his *Lives of the Caesars*. Within three years, a court scandal involving Sabina led to Septicius’ dismissal (discussed in Chapter 6) and Turbo continued as sole praetorian prefect, evidently to the end of Hadrian’s reign.⁶

One might add that Hadrian’s accession seems to have brought Sabina no special honors. Indeed, no literary source has anything to say about Sabina, other than the fact of her marriage, until about five years after her husband, Hadrian, was acclaimed emperor—a full two decades of silence. Yet we can reasonably suppose that she was in the east with Hadrian at the time of his accession, just as the *Augustae* Plotina and Sabina’s mother, Matidia I, were Trajan’s companions on his campaign. If Sabina was accompanying Hadrian, it would be worth knowing whether after Trajan’s death she returned to Rome with Plotina and Matidia, or (more dramatically) reentered the city with Hadrian himself.

Now, the military colony of Claudia Philippi Gaba in Galilee—which was administratively attached to Hadrian’s province of Syria—took the initiative almost instantly upon his acclamation to mint a coin with Sabina on the obverse, indeed, quite prematurely hailing her as *Sebaste* (= *Augusta*). An issue of larger denomination trumpeted the new ruler, identified (correctly) as “Emperor Caesar Trajan Hadrian Augustus.” The two coins are dated to 116/117 (= year 177 of its city era, which commenced with its foundation in 61/60 BCE). Gaba’s precocious

enthusiasm for Sabina may possibly suggest personal acquaintance. Or perhaps, to judge from astute patterns of commemoration in its earlier coinage, it simply was anxious to win imperial favor.⁷ We shall see (in Chapter 6) that Gaba would not be the only community to style Sabina as *Augusta* before she officially received the title in 128. Hadrian was named *pater patriae* also that same year, but it still shows up in earlier dedications to the emperor, especially soon after his accession.⁸

The Shape (and Tone) of the Sources

As for Hadrian's actual reign, broad literary treatments are not at hand. What is offered by our main texts on Hadrian—the summary of Dio Cassius, the biography in the *Historia Augusta*, the various Latin epitomators—is a narrative that seeks above all to put Hadrian's restless inquisitiveness in contrast to the militarism of his predecessor, Trajan (reigned 98–117) and the piety of his successor, Antoninus Pius (138–161).

Here is a reconstruction of the facts of his travels, in outline.⁹ Following the slow return to Rome that occupied almost the first full year of his reign (August 117–July 118), Hadrian embarked on two additional great travels. The “Second Journey” spanned the years 121–125, and in its first two years encompassed (after a quick tour of south Italy), the Rhine and Upper Danube, then Britain, Gaul, and eastern Spain (Tarraconensis). Hadrian was then diverted to Syria (where there was a Parthian threat to its eastern frontier), Anatolia, and finally Greece, where he enjoyed a prolonged stay in Athens. The evidence whether Sabina joined her husband on even part of that trek is slight and ambiguous.

The “Third Journey” was longer and even more ambitious. Early in 128 Hadrian set out for Sicily, and proceeded to the provinces of Africa Proconsularis, followed by Mauretania. The emperor returned to Rome briefly, and then set out for the east—this time surely with Sabina—reaching Athens by October of that year, where he received the new title *Olympios*. Hadrian is not positively attested back in the city before May 134. The intervening years saw first travel to Anatolia and Syria (129); Judaea, Arabia Petraea, and Egypt (130); and Syria and Anatolia again, as well as Thrace (and perhaps elsewhere in the Danubian regions), with winter at Athens (131). The first part of 132 found Hadrian at Athens, seeing to the inauguration of the massive temple of Olympian Zeus,

and his foundation of the Panhellenion, a new international league of cities with membership restricted to those thought to be authentically Greek. But the outbreak of a fierce Jewish revolt necessitated his presence once again in Judaea. Precisely how long Hadrian stayed on that front is uncertain. But it seems that for the last legs of his eventual return to Rome he took a similar route to that of the First Journey of 118, with a visit to Pannonia and from there re-entry into Italy through Aquileia in the Veneto region.

Hadrian clearly saw personal inspection of Rome's territorial empire as integral to the historical legacy of his principate. Yet when it comes to understanding the actual details of the emperor's three major journeys (which occupied at least ten of the 17 years of his reign) and actual policies in Rome and further afield, on the whole the literary sources, with the important exception of the evidence of the jurists, make a disappointing contribution.¹⁰

Let one example among many suffice. The biography in the *Historia Augusta* is so concerned with emphasizing Hadrian's pacifism that it expressly denies that he faced any serious military challenges—blithely glossing over the bloody Bar Kochba revolt of 132–135. That war spread beyond Judaea to Syria and Arabia, and required Hadrian's personal presence and the deployment of six legions in full and another four or five in part, under the best generals he had available. So severe was the fighting that Hadrian, on quelling the uprising, accepted his first acclamation as *imperator* for a military victory, and (apparently) made his first award of triumphal insignia—to fully three of his commanders. To punish the Jews for the revolt, the emperor erased their name from the province, changing its designation from Judaea to Syria Palestina.

The author of the *Historia Augusta* does know of this war. Elsewhere, he dismissingly states the Jews started the conflict “because they were forbidden to mutilate their genitals,” i.e., practice circumcision, with no further comment. As it happens, the summary of Dio Cassius is the only text we have that provides even a sketch of this Jewish revolt. Even in a brief account, his summarizer conveys the state of extreme military emergency for the Romans, and the scale of the disastrous outcome for the Jews. “Fifty of their most important outposts and 985 of their most famous villages were razed to the ground. 580,000 men were slain in the various raids and battles, and the number of those that perished by famine, disease and fire was past finding out. Thus nearly the whole of Judaea was made desolate . . . [M]any Romans, moreover, perished in this war.”¹¹

To make any real progress in understanding the nature of Hadrian's principate, we must extract what we can from the literary sources, but also heavily rely on the cumulative evidence of the emperor's actual buildings and other constructions, inscriptions, and coins. There the evidence is massive. To focus on just benefactions to the cities of the eastern provinces, "during Hadrian's twenty-one-year reign," details M. T. Boatwright, "more than 130 cities received . . . marks of his favor."¹² That favor included several instances of significant honors: grants of the title *metropolis* (literally, "mother city," but in imperial usage, akin to "regional capital city"); *neokoros* status (i.e., special permission from Rome to build temples dedicated to the living emperor); new or renewed sacred games (those named after Hadrian are attested for 21 cities); and foundations or re-foundations of cities. Indeed, more than two dozen cities henceforth showed some form of Hadrian's name (formations from Aelius or Hadrianus) in the toponym. It is indicative of the scale of this emperor's activities that four cities associated with Antinoös—including the new foundation of Antinoöpolis itself, founded in Egypt on 30 October 130, immediately after the youth's drowning—received new games.

Indeed, to comprehend the shape of Hadrian's policies, we can manage the almost overwhelming physical evidence one way by trying to discern what he did not do. In regard to Hadrian's honors for Sabina, the evidence does suggest marked restraint in the first decade of rule, and some notion of limits throughout. For instance, Hadrian—who showed unparalleled energy in establishing or modifying cities and civic organizations—seems never to have established a 'Sabinopolis.' The omission is striking, in view of the fact (seen in Chapter 3) that in Thrace the emperor Trajan commemorated his sister with a Marcianopolis and his wife with a Plotinopolis. So Hadrian had a precedent if he wanted one.

Most conspicuously, the title of *Augusta* was awarded to Sabina only in the year 128. And not until then, for all practical purposes, does her coinage commence in Rome or even in the provinces. What throws this policy into high relief is that in especially the years 117–122, Hadrian had devoted enormous effort to the public promotion of Trajan's family, with little corresponding attention to his wife. We shall examine that paradoxical state of affairs in Chapter 5.

In the final section of this chapter, I first examine some of the more tendentious themes that confront us in the literary sources on

Hadrian's personal life, and attempt to disengage how they found their way into the tradition, always with an eye toward how they affect our understanding of Sabina. Armed with more than a few caveats, I conclude with a sketch of some of the attributes of Hadrian's personality and policies that the ancient literary sources most persistently offer.

Marius Maximus as Biographer of Hadrian

"So desirous was Hadrian of conspicuous fame," we read in the *Historia Augusta* biography of that restless Roman emperor, "that he handed over the autobiographical books that he had written to his own freedmen who had a literary bent, ordering that they should publish the works under their own names."

It is a commonplace of the ancient biographical tradition that Hadrian placed a premium on his own legacy. The *Epitome* of imperial lives that has come down to us under the name Aurelius Victor speaks of the emperor's "burning desire for glory," the Byzantine summary of Dio Cassius of his "marked ambition." Hadrian is known to have written an *Autobiography*, now lost except for what seems to part of its preface (composed at the end of his life in epistolary form to Antoninus) and about a half-dozen "fragments" (most of which are better described as references).¹³

But on the face of it, the situation that the *Historia Augusta* offers us is Hadrian writing multiple lives, published under the names of his very own freedmen. This ploy would hardly offer external validation to what may be called the "official version" of Hadrian's reign. And the one name offered for these educated freedmen who received the order to publish pushes this unlikely scenario to the brink of absurdity: "for indeed, Phlegon's writings, it is said, are Hadrian's in reality."¹⁴

The reference here is to P. Aelius Phlegon, of Tralles in Asia Minor. And Phlegon is otherwise attested, beyond the nomenclature, as a freedman of Hadrian.¹⁵ Now, of Phlegon's various works of compilation, there is one—the *Book of Marvels*—that has come down to us essentially intact. The genre was paradoxography, with thematic sections offering bizarre rosters of anthropological curiosities. Another work, for us only fragmentary, treated *Long-Lived Individuals*. Hadrian for his part was deemed, in the famous phrase of Tertullian, an "explorer of all curiosities," with Latin *curiositas* as usual connoting, in a pejorative

sense, an interest in the realm of superstition or the occult. As we shall see, he also manifestly had a keen interest in how one might prolong natural life.¹⁶

However, it goes beyond mere hostile innuendo to cite a tradition that Hadrian in fact had authored the sensational works of Aelius Phlegon of Tralles, and used them to promote his own autobiographical material. It is a self-consciously ludicrous assertion meant to caricature the emperor, his interests, and his aspirations. The *Historia Augusta* in its life of Hadrian's successor, Antoninus Pius, offers a quite similar statement on ghostwriting. But it is in reverse, in this case to *credit* the later emperor: "the orations which have come down in [Antoninus'] name, some say, are really the work of others; according to Marius Maximus, however, they were his own."¹⁷

The mention of the late-second-century consular and biographer Marius Maximus rings a loud bell. This author, who seems to have written an account of the 12 Caesars from Nerva to Elagabalus, is known to have belittled Hadrian's autobiographical writings by exaggeration.¹⁸ Indeed, when the *Historia Augusta* explicitly cites Marius Maximus for material on Hadrian, this source is usually overtly hostile. Perhaps it was Marius Maximus who made the tendentious claim that Hadrian ordered his freedmen to publish works that he had written about his life under their own names. At the very least, to judge from named citations of Marius Maximus in the *Historia Augusta*, it seems that this senatorial writer made a point of undermining the "official version" of Hadrian's principate whenever he could. Though it is an old and unresolved question to what extent Marius Maximus served as a source for the *Historia Augusta*, we know that he still had an elite readership in the late fourth century.¹⁹

Marius Maximus seems to have played a decisive role as a source on this emperor's life. His picture of a cruel, suspicious, competitive, hypocritical, and self-contradictory Hadrian in turn colored Maximus' portrayal of Sabina, whom he presented in such a way as to magnify the shortcomings and failings of the emperor. The *Historia Augustus* cites Marius Maximus as the source for the item on Trajan's opposition to the marriage of Sabina to Hadrian. More generally, it seems reasonable to suggest that this author was the one who definitively sketched a picture of bitter marital discord between Hadrian and Sabina, a description that found its way into subsequent ancient narratives—and most modern biographical accounts of the emperor.²⁰

Since we lack Hadrian's autobiography (and, for that matter, the biography that Marius Maximus wrote at least two generations after the emperor's death, a little before Cassius Dio), the literary sources for us are essentially the late-fourth-century *Historia Augusta* and a handful of similarly late epitomes: Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, and an 11th-century summary of Dio, each drawing on a common fund of information.

A set number of motifs run through these literary treatments of the emperor's life. For a start, there is Hadrian's strong Hellenism, which extended to an eagerness to be initiated in the highest grade of the mysteries at Eleusis. Each source also seeks to demonstrate in list form that Hadrian had many talents, including linguistic proficiency, and accomplishments in both the literary and fine arts. And he had numerous intellectual interests, which could descend into the trivial and obscure or worse, such as astrology. We have seen that for this last attribute, Tertullian, writing just a few generations after Hadrian's death, had already offered a memorable summary phrase, *omnium curiositatum explorator* ("explorer of all curiosities").²¹

These literary sources are also in broad agreement that the emperor had an impressive appearance, enjoyed remarkable strength and endurance, and embraced a vigorous lifestyle. Hadrian displayed his robust disposition most conspicuously in his passion for the hunt. He could be solicitous of his friends. In governing, the emperor chose his advisors well and took a personal interest in law and administration. He was generous in his donatives to the People and military, and presented splendid entertainments in Rome and sponsored games even outside the city. He built magnificently, in the city of Rome and farther abroad. He traveled the known world. And he marked his reign with conspicuous philanthropy, to provinces, cities, social and professional groups, even individuals. Yet (paradoxically) he was prudent in regard to the treasury, and enforced military discipline. Most aspects of this general picture find detailed support in the documentary sources.

But our literary sources—especially the *Historia Augusta*—also are eager to show that Hadrian's personal failings were legion. These faults included his inability to control extremes of emotions, his meddlesomeness and suspicion of friends, and his savage competition with intellectual rivals, which could descend into cruelty. "Marius Maximus," offers the *Historia Augusta*, "says that he was naturally cruel and performed

so many kindnesses only because he feared that he might meet the fate which had befallen Domitian,” i.e., assassination. Above all, there was his shifting, complex, multifaceted personality—in the famous phrase of Aurelius Victor, *varius multiplex multiformis*—which often lapsed into self-contradiction.²²

These conventional notions of Hadrian’s personality especially color the portrayal of the emperor in the *Historia Augusta*. Hadrian’s life did present a string of highly controversial episodes, on which even our summary sources felt the need to acknowledge variant traditions. These events include foremost the role of Plotina in his adoption by Trajan, the execution of the four consulars in 118, and especially the relationship with Antinoös and the circumstances of his beloved’s death in the Nile in October 130. Then there is the nature of Hadrian’s marriage to Sabina (which of course is central to our study), his own adoption of Lucius Aelius in 136 and Antoninus Pius in 138, the emperor’s death in July 138, and the fierce debate over his memory (including deification) that followed in Rome. In Chapter 5 I turn my attention to some of these major problems, starting first with a remarkable relationship that escapes the censure of our literary sources—the emperor Hadrian’s grief at the death of his mother-in-law, and the striking posthumous honors that followed.

Hadrian's Relationships

Our sources (literary and documentary) have much to offer about four close relationships Hadrian developed beyond his marriage, namely, with Trajan's niece (and Sabina's mother) Matidia the Elder; Trajan's widow, Plotina; the fetching Bithynian youth Antinoös; and the handsome consular L. Ceionius Commodus, whom Hadrian adopted and publicly promoted as his heir, restyled as L. Aelius Caesar. One common denominator in the narratives that emerge is Hadrian's deep—indeed, at times excessive—emotional attachment toward these women and men. All died during his principate, so we get to see the emperor's treatment of them in both life and death. We hear far less about how these individuals bonded to him, and nothing about what Sabina thought or felt as she witnessed these attachments play out, to a large extent in the public sphere. It does seem vital to explore each of these instances, which collectively go some way toward illuminating the character of Hadrian's marriage to Sabina. The story of Ceionius Commodus is of special importance, in that his death triggered a sequence of decisions by Hadrian that was to determine the character and trajectory of the principate for almost the rest of the second century CE.

Hadrian's Commemoration of His Mother-in-Law, Matidia I

December of the year 119 saw the death of Matidia the Elder, mother of Matidia II and her half-sister Sabina. Matidia I was probably in her earliest 50s. We have seen in Chapter 3 how Trajan energetically promoted this Matidia in his coinage, starting already in 112. The real push, of

course, followed upon the death and divinization of her mother (and Trajan's elder sister), Marciana, and her own subsequent elevation as *Augusta*. We also noted how the elder Matidia traveled alongside Trajan's wife, Plotina, in the eastern provinces, as companions of the emperor at the time of his Parthian campaign (113–117). The presence on Trajan's expedition of both the *Augustae* would have conveyed the impression of family unity and stability. Trajanic coinage of Mytilene in Lesbos that honored Plotina and Matidia together (sometime after 112) reflects what was doubtless the desired official image, with Matidia serving as her mother's replacement in the original triad with the emperor. But the travel with Trajan also went some way toward keeping these imperial women beyond the reach of scandal.¹

A question immediately presents itself. For the three Trajanic *Augustae*, can we discern a hierarchy? Here the coinage of the eastern provinces helps. Under the reign of her uncle, Trajan, Matidia *Augusta*—without further identification—features on the bronze coins of various communities in Anatolia (in Lydia, Phrygia, and Cilicia), often paired with the emperor. Those of Anazarbus, in the interior of eastern Cilicia, are of particular interest, for they bear a date, “year 132” of its city era (= 113/114)—i.e., soon after the death and deification of Marciana, and Matidia's appointment as *Augusta* and arrival afterward in the east—and form part of a series with issues of that date honoring also Marciana and Plotina. All feature a portrait of Trajan on the obverse, with those of the women on reverse. The deified Marciana is depicted on the lowest denomination of the three, while Matidia is commemorated on the next most valuable piece. These concurrent issues point up the understanding that the deceased mother had been succeeded in her formal role by her daughter. The image of Plotina is on the largest denomination of the set.

In general, provincial coinage depicting Plotina is much more extensive than that for Marciana and Matidia (extending beyond Anatolia to Macedonia as well as Judaea), with dated examples falling over more of a range, both preceding Trajan's eastern campaign, and coinciding with the empress's presence in the east (but none later than 114/115). And at Rome, Plotina's coinage, once it had started in 112, greatly outstripped that of Trajan's sister and niece. In the hierarchy of Trajan's women, Plotina was clearly at the top.²

And what about Hadrian, who inherited (so to speak) two of the Trajanic *Augustae*? A top priority for the new emperor on his accession

was to emphasize the validity of his adoption by Trajan, for whom he quickly requested and obtained divine honors from the Senate. A truly extensive series of coins celebrated Hadrian's newly deified adoptive father, Trajan, sometimes showing him on the obverse in collocation with his wife, Plotina, on the reverse. Here Hadrian's titulature, when specified, is invariably that of the year 117. Among these early post-accession issues are found two closely related *aureus* types in which the same obverse portrait of Hadrian is paired with a reverse showing either Trajan (with legend DIVO TRAIANO PATRI AVG, "to his divine father Trajan Augustus") or his adoptive mother, Plotina (PLOTINAE AVG). In one instance she even makes an appearance on the obverse, termed PLOTINA AVG DIVI ("wife of the deified Augustus" or "Augusta wife of the deified"); the reverse depicts a seated Vesta with a legend that continues Trajan's titulature ('Parthicus').

Hadrian devoted no coins to Trajan's sister, Marciana, nor for that matter to their deified father, Trajan senior. Nor did he continue the Matidia solo issues. Rather, he chose to link the two living Trajanic *Augustae* with an *aureus* that showed Plotina on the obverse with one diadem crowning her head, and Matidia with a double diadem on the reverse. The legends—PLOTINAE AVG(ustae), MATIDIAE AVG(ustae)—are in the dative case, cast in the form of a dedication. Though Plotina had precedence here, Hadrian clearly viewed each woman as significant to his new regime.³

Matidia on her death in 119 was immediately deified, with a temple (and apparently altar) in Rome to follow. The new temple was to be sited just northeast of one of Hadrian's grandest and most important constructions, the Pantheon; there is reason to believe Matidia's temple may have stood higher than it. What is certain is that Hadrian's temple to his mother-in-law and its associated structures encompassed a stunningly large area. The temple proper had eight columns in the front and back (i.e., the largest standard type), with 13 columns at the side. Each column was roughly 1.7 m wide. A cult statue of Matidia, probably larger than life size, was exhibited within. A shrine flanked the temple on each of its long sides. And two grand porticos framing that complex were dedicated respectively to the deified *Augustae* Marciana and Matidia.

We have a good notion of the general appearance of the architectural ensemble, thanks to its presence on the Severan-era marble map of the city. And a medallion struck by Hadrian at some point before 128

shows on its reverse a stylized rendition of each of the basic elements. There an enormous cult statue appears between (merely) two columns. The accompanying legend on the medal reads *DIVAE MATIDIAE SOCRVI*, “to the deified Matidia, his mother-in-law.”⁴

The evocation of a mother-in-law by title is unique in Roman coins and medals. It does not figure on the extensive series of coins minted at Rome (gold and silver) that commemorates Matidia’s consecration. For that, the main series shows on obverse a portrait of Matidia identified by name and as *DIVA* and *AVGVSTA*, with double diadem, and on reverse an eagle with spread wings standing on a scepter, a symbol of her deification. A less extensive series has a figure of *Pietas* on the reverse, engaged in sacrifice at an altar. Matidia is presented as important in her own right, with no mention (as we see in the Trajanic coinage) that she was the daughter of the deified Marciana. The few dedicatory inscriptions in the provinces that mention the deified Matidia (almost invariably in genealogical lists) place that relationship front and center, since it is Hadrian’s link to Trajan.⁵

Hadrian himself delivered a (hard to date) speech of praise for his mother-in-law, Matidia, in 119—at her funeral, or on her consecration, or on an occasion between those two events. By a remarkable stroke of luck, we have a substantial excerpt of that speech, which has come to us from 16th-century copies of an inscription once located at Tibur (modern Tivoli). Matidia may have died there. Hadrian conspicuously favored the place, which he of course soon made the site of his massive retreat; the family of Matidia’s deceased husband, the Vibii, also had a villa there.

Amid many ostentatiously candid declarations of profound personal grief, Hadrian in his speech refers to “my Sabina” and calls the elder Matidia his “most beloved mother-in-law,” claiming he regarded her as his own mother. At one point Hadrian even emotively addresses her—*o carissima* (“most precious”)—and underlines how she combined superior beauty with supreme chastity. (The precise combination of these two qualities seems unparalleled in Latin inscriptions.) Hadrian in his address further focuses on Matidia’s ancestry, her exemplary obedience toward her deified mother, Marciana; her fidelity to her deceased husband (i.e., L. Vibius Sabinus, her second marriage) even through a long widowhood; her overgenerosity as a mother, “gloomy towards none.” In reference to her presence with Trajan and Plotina on the Parthian campaign of 113–117, she is described as a valued traveling

companion of her uncle the emperor until his death. As for her relationship with Hadrian, we get an awkward circumlocution: “[Matidia] never asked anything of me, and did not ask for many things which I would rather have wished to be asked for . . . [S]he preferred to rejoice in my station rather than to make use of it.”

It is genuinely “a remarkable string of qualities” that Hadrian ascribes to Matidia in that speech, as A. R. Birley notes.⁶ Significantly, in the extant parts of the copied inscription, there is no mention that her daughters Sabina or Matidia II inherited any of these attributes. The only reference to their relationship is that Matidia as a mother was “most indulgent.” It is hard not to suspect that the two daughters, especially Sabina, formed the target audience for these effusive remarks. Much more pointedly, in terms of public perceptions, Hadrian did not follow the precedent set by Trajan in 112 after Marciana’s death and deification, when the emperor immediately—on the same day as Marciana’s consecration—had Matidia appointed *Augusta* in her mother’s stead. It was to take Sabina almost a full decade to receive that distinction. The younger Matidia, for her part, never gained the title. But in this, as I shall argue, we should see careful policy rather than personal pique on the part of Hadrian.

Hadrian and Trajan’s Wife, Plotina

The *Historia Augusta*, ever eager to portray Hadrian as a creature of contradictions, makes much of his efforts to exercise control over his court (dismissing his praetorian prefect Septicius Clarus and secretary, Suetonius, “and many others” for an affront to Sabina), as well as his maintenance of a network of spies that managed to pry even into the minute personal affairs of his friends. But we are told that the same (unnamed) sources who make those allegations also criticize the emperor’s “passion for adult males and the adulteries with married women to which he is said to have been addicted, adding also the charge that he did not even keep faith with his friends.”⁷

If we take the literary sources at their word, it seems that Hadrian had just two actual loves in his life—Plotina and Antinoös. (Sabina does not figure.) The *Historia Augusta* presents Plotina as Hadrian’s great patron. She not only facilitated his marriage to Sabina, over Trajan’s opposition, but Plotina also arranged his appointment as a legate on

Trajan's Parthian campaign (which set out from Rome probably in May 113); and secured the designation (in 117) of Hadrian's second consulship for the following year, an appointment which (we are told) marked an obvious indication that Trajan would adopt him.⁸ The *Historia Augusta* biography also suggests the possibility that Plotina went so far as to counterfeit the adoption—after Trajan had died.

Aurelius Victor also alludes to this tradition, reporting that “some think [Hadrian] gained the imperial power through the personal influence of Trajan's wife Plotina.”⁹ What prompted suspicion about the adoption was the timing. In 117 Hadrian had command of the province of Syria as its governor. News of Trajan's act at Selinus reached Hadrian at Antioch on 9 August, with the announcement of the emperor's death to follow on 11 August 117. Hadrian's substantial army then immediately proclaimed him as Trajan's successor. Without waiting for confirmation from Rome and the Senate, Hadrian swiftly announced the adoption and succession and ordered public celebration of his accession throughout the empire.

Dio Cassius reports it as fact that Plotina, aided by Hadrian's former guardian, Attianus, had engineered the accession—and she did it “out of romantic love” for Hadrian. In support Dio cites an oral tradition that his father, Cassius Apronianus, had heard, when serving as governor of the province of Cilicia around the year 180, several generations after the events in question. Explains Dio, “my father . . . had ascertained accurately . . . that the death of Trajan was concealed for several days in order that Hadrian's adoption might be announced first.” Dio then adduces additional proof, in that Plotina now took up an unprecedented official role. “Trajan's letters to the Senate . . . were signed, not by him, but by Plotina, although she had not done this in any previous instance.”¹⁰

Plotina may have been just six or seven years older than Hadrian, and lived at least four or five years into his reign. What is certain is that she had great influence with him. A dossier of epigraphic documents from the year 121 shows the philosophers of the Epicurean school at Athens appealing directly to this empress, especially seeking to be released from the restriction that the head of this sect be a Roman citizen. Plotina in turn wrote a letter of advocacy in Latin to Hadrian, addressing him as “lord” (*domine*), and stressing “that you know very well [my]” disposition toward this philosophical school. Hadrian duly

sent a rescript in Latin to Athens, acceding to Plotina's requests, though (significantly) he did not mention her intervention.

To report and celebrate this decision, Plotina Augusta wrote her own jubilant letter in Greek to "all her friends" among the Epicureans, expressing solidarity both explicitly ("we have what we hoped to achieve") and implicitly (by coloring her text with the characteristic diminutives and technical language of the school). She also reminds the Epicureans that they owe strong gratitude to Hadrian, "who is truly a benefactor and regulator of all culture and therefore a most august emperor. And to me he is also most beloved (*prospilettatos*) in all respects as both an exceptional master and good son."

The two surely had a real intellectual and spiritual bond. When Hadrian was at Athens in 125, he had occasion to write to the Epicureans again, and here seems deliberately to have evoked the style of Plotina's letter of 121. It need not follow that Hadrian had Epicurean interests of his own. The *Historia Augusta* biography, ever eager to point up the emperor's contradictory nature, states that among his best friends were "Epictetus and Heliodorus," philosophers of two different schools, the Stoic and the Epicurean. This contrast would have struck an ancient reader as zany.¹¹

At the time of the death of Plotina, in late 122 or early 123, the emperor was either in Gaul or at Tarraco in Spain, on the first leg of his second great imperial journey. The epitomator of Dio Cassius relates that Hadrian "honored her exceedingly, wearing black for nine days"—this mode of mourning was expected, but perhaps thought unusual in that the emperor was on campaign—"erecting a temple to her and composing some hymns in her memory." The *Historia Augusta* author adds that Hadrian honored Plotina with a sumptuous construction (*basilica*) at her birthplace of Nemausus (modern Nîmes). Dio also reports that Hadrian gave her a funeral oration (surely not until his return to Rome in 125), translating a single line by way of example. "Though she asked much of me, she was never refused anything." By this—explains Dio or, rather, his summarizer—Hadrian simply meant to say, "Her requests were of such a character that they neither burdened me nor afforded me any justification for opposing them." In the one instance that we can check, the case of the Epicureans at Athens, we find this statement confirmed. Deification certainly followed, though the date is irrecoverable. No specific coin issue commemorate it, and the first evidence came late

in Hadrian's reign, an issue jointly dedicated to his "divine parents," Trajan and Plotina.¹²

Antinoös, the Youth from Bithynia

Whatever the precise nature of the relationship between Plotina and Hadrian, it fell short of high notoriety in antiquity. Only Dio Cassius explicitly asserts (twice) a romantic element, and this he may have viewed as his own original contribution to the historiography of Hadrian's accession, based on his senatorial father's recollections. A different matter altogether is the case of Antinoös, a phenomenon of Hadrian's Third Journey, to the east, when Sabina was fully present. Antinoös was a youth who in the space of about two years emerged from deep obscurity in Bithynia and ended up as Hadrian's closest companion and finally, after a mysterious death in Egypt, an exceedingly prominent object of empire-wide cultic veneration. The question of his relationship to Hadrian and the extreme honors the emperor accorded him after his death not only captivated our ancient sources, but also moved to center stage in the course of the 18th century, when statues excavated at the emperor's Villa at Tivoli—including many portraits of Antinoös—found their way into seemingly every major European collection. Understanding the public role that Hadrian meant for this youth to play in his regime is crucial for any assessment of the position of Sabina.

In terms of the sources, Antinoös in some respects presents a more extreme version of the problems we have encountered with Sabina. Not a single first-person statement can be attached to Antinoös, real or alleged. We do have a few contemporary treatments of Antinoös in poetry, which are strongly encomiastic. It is difficult to say whether these examples were written during his lifetime or directly after his premature death, by drowning in the Nile in late October 130. Otherwise the closest contemporary literary sources are the Christian apologist Justin Martyr (died ca. 165), the Christian chronicler Hegisippus (died ca. 180), and the Greek travel writer Pausanias (who died also ca. 180). Next in time are earlier Christian authors such as Tertullian (whose works date to between ca. 190 and ca. 220), who are invariably polemical. The historiographical tradition as represented by Dio Cassius, the *Historia Augusta*, and Aurelius Victor is also negative. But

the (anonymous) fifth-century *Epitome de Caesaribus* never mentions Antinoös (just as Aurelius Victor's *Liber de Caesaribus* never mentions Sabina). Later Christian authors, if anything, grow more hostile.

In regard to portraits, inscriptions, and numismatic commemorations of Antinoös, all are posthumous—but virtually all closely follow upon his death, and so date to the reign of Hadrian. Later emperors had no interest in perpetuating his actual cult. Interestingly, a sizable proportion of the medallions and coins minted to commemorate Antinoös saw informal alteration in antiquity of one sort or another. This adaptation is significant in itself, since it attests to the popular power of his image for reuse as amulets and the like. Antinoös cut a striking figure (modern works routinely note his resemblance to a young Elvis Presley), so much so that specific identification on his numismatic portraits was not absolutely needed. He can be readily recognized even when assimilated on the flan of medallions and coins with divine figures such as Hermes or various river gods. The fact that he appears on the obverse of certain “contorniate” souvenir medallions of the late fourth and early fifth century—as did charismatic historical figures such as Alexander the Great, Nero, Trajan and Hadrian himself—attests to his long-lasting spell on the Roman popular imagination.¹³

Here in outline is what we are told about the life of Antinoös. (We shall leave the discussion of his death to Chapter 7.) “By birth,” says Pausanias, who shows a noticeable interest in the youth, “Antinoös was from Bithynium, beyond [i.e., east of] the river Sangarius [= modern Sakarya].” Pausanias adds that Arcadians from Mantinea originally founded it, which indubitably was a point of local pride. There was a locality named Mantineion in the vicinity of Bithynium, and there was a tradition that Antinoös’ mother was called Mantinoe. What is more, Pausanias records that an Antinoe, a daughter of an Arcadian king, Cepheus of Tegea, established the Mantineans at their present site in Arcadia. One suspects this foundation legend inspired the choice of name for our Antinoös, which is otherwise exquisitely rare in the Roman imperial period (one or two other instances).

Dio confirms the place of birth, adding that Bithynium is now called Claudiopoliis—a fact that Pausanias seems deliberately to have ignored, as he sometimes does with imperial renamings. Claudiopoliis (modern Bolu) was the easternmost city of Bithynia, and occupied a site at the junction of two ancient roads important for the communication of the interior with Paphlagonia and Pontus. Its pastoral setting proved

key for the later presentation of Antinoös' image, though his name and (if accurate) that of his mother suggest he sprang from a family of local notables who claimed Mantinean ancestry. The Mantineans, who, as A. R. Birley notes, "were later to honour Antinous with particular fervor," certainly claimed him as one of their own.¹⁴

Our literary sources tell us practically nothing about Antinoös' parentage or early life and neglect to say how this young man from a minor city of eastern Bithynia came to Hadrian's attention. Tertullian inveighs against those who "would make a god . . . out of someone from the pages' quarters of the court," implying that Antinoös was an imperial slave. But that seems to be polemical exaggeration. Our sources, however, are expansive on Antinoös' youth (terming him "lad," often "boy," sometimes "ephebe") and great beauty. From his portraiture it is likely he was an older adolescent at the time of his death.¹⁵

What really attracted the attention of the literary sources was the question of the nature of his relationship with Hadrian. "Although it may have been widely assumed," points out C. P. Jones, "that Antinoös was the passive partner (*erômenos*) and Hadrian the active (*erastês*), he is in fact a complete blank." No official representation casts them as lovers. Pausanias, writing not long after Hadrian's rule, simply but somewhat leadingly says Antinoös "was excessively esteemed" by the emperor. This author also suggests that Antinoös' companionship of the ruler was public and conspicuous. "Though I never saw him among men in his lifetime," says Pausanias, seeming to acknowledge that many did, "I have seen him in statues and paintings."¹⁶

Christian authors soon bluntly inveigh against the relationship. At issue are the gaping disparities in age and social status, the presumption of sexual activity, Hadrian's supposed motivations for granting the posthumous honors, and their manifest extravagance. First is Justin Martyr, in his *First Apology*, which he addressed to the emperor Antoninus Pius (reigned 138–161); his adopted sons, Lucius Verus and Marcus Aurelius; and the Roman Senate and People. There Justin, as part of an argument that Christian sexual mores are superior to those of pagans, cites Antinoös as a negative example, "having been alive just lately, whom all hastened to worship as a god out of fear—though understanding who he was and from where he originated." Next is the chronicler Hegesippus, writing at the latest in the 170s, who baldly terms Antinoös the emperor's "slave." Hegesippus goes on to note that Antinoös nonetheless was celebrated by a festival in his name, "instituted in my time," and that

Hadrian “established a city named after Antinoös, and prophets.” The implication, as G. Renberg points out, is that the youth’s cult site at Antinoöpolis featured an oracle administered by official mediators. In the 190s, Clement of Alexandria conjures up the picture of sleepless, scandalous nights spent by the emperor as *erastes* and youth as *eromenos*, for which Antinoös in the end received a grave memorial, a temple, and, indeed, his eponymous city. Meanwhile Tertullian asserts that Antinoös was more dear to Hadrian than Ganymede was to Zeus, with the result that his honors went uncontested.¹⁷

Origen in his *Against Celsus* (written ca. 248) is the most expansive of the early Church Fathers on the topic of Antinoös. Here he responds to a Greek philosopher who in a work of the late 170s evidently had compared the Christian worship of Jesus with the ritual practices at Antinoöpolis that honored Hadrian’s “sexual plaything” (*paidika*). Origen, who had spent the first half of his career in Alexandria and so surely had firsthand knowledge of the cult, countered with an angry reply. What is there in common, he asks, between the blameless Jesus, and “a life spent amid the sexual playthings (*paidika*) of Hadrian,” on the part of one who yielded to “womanly disease,” i.e., submitted to a passive homosexual role? Plus on investigation, Origen says, Antinoös’ mysteries and the predictions of his oracle are shown to be a sham. A little more than a half-century later, Athanasius also calls Antinoös the emperor’s “sexual favorite” (*paidikos*), as well as “servant of his pleasure,” and adds that his moral character was rotten to the core. John Chrysostom (lived ca. 347–407) cites Antinoös, the *paidika* of Hadrian, as an instance of lavish pagan honors to low-status individuals. This polemical tradition continues, without significant elaboration or reflection, in subsequent Christian authors.¹⁸

After Pausanias, non-Christian writers show little reticence in spelling out their view of the facts, on which their perceptions largely concur with those of the Church Fathers. In the early third century, Dio Cassius flatly terms the youth Hadrian’s *paidika* (“erotic darling”), but states that their love was reciprocal. The *Historia Augusta* takes it as obvious that the beauty of the youth and the licentiousness of the emperor made for a sexual relationship. Aurelius Victor avers neutrality on the question of whether Hadrian was a serial pederast and for this reason decreed such extravagant posthumous honors for Antinoös. All the same, Aurelius Victor points out that the emperor’s loose morals and the great disparity in their ages make their association “suspect.”

So established became the tradition on Hadrian's sexual relationship with the youth that by the late Byzantine period, the *Suda* encyclopedia in its entry on *paidika* lists Antinoös by way of illustrative example. A notable exception in our sources is the horoscope of Hadrian transmitted by Antigonus of Nicaea. He wrote his astrological manual in the mid-second century CE, and so close to the emperor's reign, from a perspective that indeed strongly reflects Hadrian's official ideology. Antigonus is silent on the relationship.¹⁹

It seems worth collecting at such length ancient perceptions of the relationship of Hadrian and Antinoös, since they simultaneously both presuppose and promote a certain understanding of his marriage. It emerges that our literary sources—some writing not long after Antinoös' death—are pretty much unanimous on the sexual nature of the bond between emperor and youth, though they voice their judgments with varying degrees of explicitness and indignation. And as we shall see in Chapter 7, the epitome of Dio Cassius, the *Historia Augusta*, and Aurelius Victor all assert that the death of Antinoös was not an accident, contrary to what Hadrian himself stated in his *Autobiography*. This point is noteworthy, for it demonstrates that by the early third century a cynical account of Hadrian's role in the episode already was at hand, a role that in fact later won out as the prevailing tradition.²⁰ It seems reasonable to suppose that other topics that Hadrian treated in his *Autobiography* also had received the same treatment by this time.

Hadrian's First Choice of Heir: L. Ceionius Commodus (Consul 136)

Let us turn to a figure who rises to brief but massive prominence in the last phase of Hadrian's principate, when the emperor and Sabina had finally returned to Rome from their great journey to the east. It is L. Ceionius Commodus, whom Hadrian adopted, having completed almost a full two decades of rule and prompted at last by a serious illness to make this long-delayed decision. Commodus was thereafter styled L. Aelius Caesar, a nomenclature that clearly marked him as heir to the throne—and that turned out to be a productive precedent for designating future emperors. Commodus, then aged 35, had begun the year 136 as one of the two ordinary consuls; the date of the adoption was at some point not long after 19 June of that year.

Sabina can be shown to be very much alive at the time: a dedication from Avitta Bibba in Africa Proconsularis honors Hadrian, Aelius Caesar, and Sabina (not yet designated as *diva*) together. Sabina now found herself in the formal role not just of adoptive mother, but also grandmother: Commodus had a seven-year-old son, as well as two daughters. Expensive games and donatives are said to have celebrated the adoption. And dynastic plans were immediately set in motion. Hadrian soon arranged one of the daughters to be betrothed to the 15-year-old Marcus Aurelius, the future emperor.²¹

The timing of this major decision reminds one of Trajan's studied procrastination in adopting Hadrian. It also seems Hadrian, once made heir apparent, was marked out as 'Caesar' (albeit for a few days, at most). But the choice of precisely L. Ceionius Commodus to fill this role must have come as a genuine surprise to the imperial court and to the Senate. Commodus' family had its origins in Bononia (modern Bologna). Though he could point toward a consular grandfather and father, he was not a relative of the emperor. Indeed, he was married to a daughter of C. Avidius Nigrinus, a highly capable commander who flourished under Trajan but whom Hadrian had executed as a conspirator in the "affair of the four consulars" in the year 118.²²

Commodus himself was in noticeably frail health. Dio remarks that Hadrian appointed him "Caesar for the Romans, though he frequently vomited blood." The *Historia Augusta* makes much of his sickness (generally thought in the modern era to be caused by tuberculosis) and describes Hadrian's serious regrets almost immediately after the act of adoption.

Hadrian did make his new adoptive son governor of both Lower and Upper Pannonia in summer 136, had him voted tribunician power (on 10 December 136 or later), and granted him a second consecutive ordinary consulship for 137. An extensive series of coins was minted at Rome, virtually all explicitly dated to this second consulship, and emphasizing especially the strong bond between emperor and heir, with prevalent PIETAS and CONCORDIA reverse types (in gold, silver, and bronze). Another set of reverse types in bronze proclaims the Pannonian command.

The newly created Caesar managed to survive the year and make it back to Rome from his challenging province, but died on 1 January 138. He received a public funeral said to be worthy of an emperor, but (significantly) his honors fell short of divinization. Later, probably no earlier

than 140, Antoninus Pius saw to his burial in the new mausoleum that his predecessor had constructed across the Tiber in the Vatican area.²³

The *Historia Augusta* in its separate biographies of Hadrian and Aelius acknowledges Commodus' illustrious background, but takes special pains to accentuate the negative aspects of Hadrian's choice of heir, asserting that "all were against it." (That crowd presumably would have included Sabina.) This source claims that it was nothing other than Commodus' physical attractiveness that brought him to the emperor's attention, and that "those who have written about the life of Hadrian with special care"—here one suspects again the name Marius Maximus—relate that he adopted the man "especially to gratify his own sexual pleasure." Anonymous sources are cited for an oath sworn in connection with the adoption with "secret terms" between the two. The claim also is made that Commodus had uniquely powerful influence with the emperor, with whom he gained all his requests.²⁴

Elsewhere, the *Historia Augusta* cites "the works of the freedman Phlegon" for an alleged letter of Hadrian to his aged brother-in-law L. Iulius Ursus Servianus, which pairs Antinoös and Commodus as objects of contemporary calumny. Though the document is plainly fake (for one thing, it presents an impossible chronology), the collocation of Hadrian's two favorites in the popular imagination may have been real. During his provincial command, the newly adopted Aelius Caesar is known to have promoted the cult of Antinoös, erecting a temple in his honor at Carnuntum in Upper Pannonia; there is also a joint dedication of Hadrian and Aelius Caesar to "Antinoös Hero" at Singidunum (modern Belgrade) in Upper Moesia. Consider also tiny Tmolus, in the shadow of Sardis, in Lydia, which seems to have had difficulty in processing the Hadrianic imperial hierarchy in this later stage. There the people of the town circulated a coin series in three denominations, depicting Sabina on the obverse of the one with the lowest value; Hadrian and his newly adopted son and designated heir, Aelius, on the middle issue (valued at one and a half times the Sabina piece); and Antinoös at the top (a double of the Sabina coin).²⁵

Other Aspirants to the Throne

The *Historia Augusta* implies Hadrian considered Commodus for adoption and appointment as heir only after every other viable option

over the course of his reign had disallowed itself. “In a word,” says this source in a purposeful paradox, “all those whose rule he considered, he hated as if they were future emperors.” It is alleged that among earlier candidates for the succession were C. Avidius Nigrinus himself (put to death in 118), A. Platorius Nepos (*cos.* 119, whom Hadrian made governor of Britain but is said eventually to have loathed), and a young consular “at that time esteemed by the Senate” and for that reason incurring the emperor’s hatred, D. Terentius Gentianus (*cos. suff.* 116, who evidently died before 130).

Later Hadrian—apparently after he had fallen ill in 136—is said to have mooted his quite aged brother-in-law, Servianus (*cos.* III in 134, who had lost his wife, Domitia Paulina, a few years previous), as well as Servianus’ grandson, Pedanius Fuscus. As Hadrian’s grandnephew, Pedanius was a male relative in his mid-20s—indeed, the only one of a suitable age to be considered as heir.²⁶ But it was Commodus whom Hadrian decided to choose. Before long both grandfather and grandson were “compelled to die,” though Servianus had reached his 90th year. Our summarizer of Dio states it was because the two were opposed to Commodus’ adoption. Their demise must have come after the act of adoption, with Pedanius Fuscus preceding his grandfather in death. The *Historia Augusta*, however, seems to offer two chronologies for the forced suicide of Servianus: before the decision to adopt Commodus, and also just before Hadrian’s death.

A later date is preferable. The astrologer Antigonus of Nicaea, a near contemporary of Hadrian, preserves for us our earliest version of these events. It takes the form of a horoscope of Pedanius Fuscus—the man is unnamed, but his identity is clear—that reflects the emperor’s point of view on his fall. “He was of most eminent and illustrious birth on both his father’s and his mother’s side,” begins the narrative part of Pedanius’ horoscope. We can discern that his father was a senator from Barcino (Barcelona); his mother, Julia, was daughter of Servianus and Hadrian’s sister, Domitia Paulina—and so Hadrian’s niece. Antigonus tells us that his birthdate fell on 5 or 6 April of the year 113. The horoscope continues, “he was brought up with great expectations and was already looking forward to acceding to the imperial power. Through ill counsel, he came to grief at the age of about 25.” (The nature of his bad decision is not described.) “And being denounced to the emperor he was destroyed along with an old man of his family, who was falsely accused because of him. Furthermore all his family members were

relegated to humble positions.” Then follows a final point, which one presumes is relevant to Pedanius’ fate: “he was given to erotic passion and fond of gladiators.”

The *Historia Augusta* preserves what seem to be some of the calumnies that brought down his grandfather Servianus, which it reports as facts: “he had thrown a banquet for the imperial slaves, had sat on a royal throne placed next to his bed, and, though an old man and a nonagenarian, used to arise and go forth publicly to the soldiers’ stations.” As for the charge against his grandson, “driven by prophecies and omens, he was hoping for the imperial power.” But it is the astrological text that helps us with the date and makes possible the interpretation of this incident. If Pedanius Fuscus’ fatal year was his 25th, the incident in question took place between April 137 to April 138, and so clearly after Commodus’ adoption and quite possibly after his death.²⁷

The Appointment of Antoninus as Replacement Heir

No obvious explanation offers itself for Hadrian’s apparently unexpected and indeed precipitous decision to appoint the sickly L. Ceionius Commodus as his heir. One scholar found the whole affair so inexplicable that he suggested that Commodus was in fact Hadrian’s illegitimate son.²⁸ The appointment soon after adoption to a combined Pannonian province removed Aelius Caesar from direct exposure to a hostile court and Senate. But this challenging command probably also hastened his demise. Whatever the facts—which seem irrecoverable on our present evidence—it does seem that Hadrian in his succession plans was looking not just toward the newly coined L. Aelius Caesar, but also his children, to establish a dynasty for the next two generations and beyond.

And that is precisely what happened. After the death on 1 January 138 of his first choice as heir, Hadrian next settled on the senator T. Aurelius Fulvus Boionius Arrius Antoninus (*cos.* 120), whom he designated on 24 January and adopted on 25 February. In all probability, it was between the announcement and ratification that Pedanius Fuscus made his move (whatever form that took), and brought ruin to himself and his grandfather. We hear of opposition to the adoption of Antoninus from other quarters, including from the long-trusted L. Catilius Severus (*cos.* 110, II 120), whom Hadrian removed from his office of city prefect.

The interval between the elimination of grandson and grandfather may have been some weeks or even a few months. A likely *terminus* for the two deaths is early summer 138, when Hadrian retired to the coastal resort of Baiae on the Gulf of Naples and left Antoninus in charge of the city. It was at Baiae on 10 July 138 that Hadrian met his death, in the company of his appointed heir, who acceded to the throne as Antoninus Pius.²⁹

The Accession of Antoninus

Hadrian's handling in early 138 of these real or presumed dissidents had further antagonized an already hostile senatorial order. It had not forgotten the excesses of the first year of the emperor's reign, which saw the brutal removal of four consulars he deemed dangerous. The Senate's first impulse, on hearing of Hadrian's passing at Baiae, was to treat him like a Caligula, Nero, or Domitian, who had all come to a violent end. The senators were determined to pass *post mortem* punishments on Hadrian, starting with sanctions against his memory, and extending to rescission of his acts. It is an indication of the strength of the Senate's sentiment that Antoninus did not at first dare to bring Hadrian's corpse back to Rome, but rather had him buried temporarily near Baiae at Puteoli.³⁰

Looming literally as background to the crisis was the massive and still unfinished mausoleum that Hadrian had created for himself at a prominent bend of the Tiber, on its west bank. He started that structure perhaps as early as 123, and certainly by 130—seemingly as a pledge to the city that his peregrinations would not last forever. The mausoleum, today's Castel Sant'Angelo, was situated in gardens on the edge of the marshy Ager Vaticanus, across the river from the Campus Martius. In 134 Hadrian had built a bridge to link the Campus and the Vatican. But it was Antoninus who had to complete and dedicate the tomb structure, a short kilometer southwest of the area of Augustus' own gigantic mausoleum, which we are told had now reached capacity. Both tombs essentially took the external form of a massive masonry-covered cylinder supporting elaborate architectural and sculptural decoration, with multiple chambers (and different solutions to their access) within. Each has seen much reuse since antiquity, and so a great deal has been lost. But what

immediately distinguishes the two is that Hadrian placed his circular tomb on a square base (measuring 300 Roman ft on each side), in a bid to surpass Augustus in both the footprint and (almost certainly) the height of his monument.³¹

Given these facts, Antoninus must have anticipated a mighty struggle with the Senate if he had to leave Hadrian's remains at the Bay of Naples. Antoninus' earliest coins as emperor advertise that he did quickly receive a string of honors, namely, the title of Augustus, designation for a (second) consulship to be held in 139, and the post of Pontifex Maximus (i.e., chief priest of the Roman state religion). But the Senate's attack on the legacy of Hadrian deeply concerned the legitimacy of the succession. "If Hadrian's acts are invalid, Antoninus was neither legal heir nor consul designate," points out L. Yarrow. It was not until 139 that Antoninus' wife, Faustina I, took the title *Augusta*. And only then, following the precedent set by Sabina and Hadrian, did the emperor for his part assume *pater patriae*.³²

Eventually, Antoninus compelled the Senate to vote his predecessor divinization. He marked Hadrian's consecration in a limited set of coin issues in Rome, consisting of just two types. One reverse (in gold) revives an image used for the deified Sabina, and shows an eagle flying right, carrying off Hadrian skyward; the other (in silver) is a traditional *consecratio* type used prominently by the Flavians, and portrays an eagle perched on a globe. P. V. Hill in a careful study of Antoninus' coinage guessed that those consecration issues dated to earliest 139. Yet Hadrian's own burial inscription displayed on the podium of his mausoleum at Rome shows that his divinization cannot have come before the second half of that year, and probably not before October. For it was not until Antoninus was consul designate for 140 that he managed to inter Hadrian and Sabina in that grandiose new tomb. Antoninus' detailed commemorative inscription "to his parents" indicates that Sabina at that point is deified, but Hadrian is not.³³

After that consecration, Antoninus moved the remains of L. Aelius Caesar, duly noted as "the son of the deified Hadrian Augustus," into the new mausoleum. He also pushed further tangible honors for Hadrian, including a temple and Greek-style games at Puteoli, and, most notably, a large temple in Rome in the Campus Martius (dedicated 145). And so Antoninus began what proved, over the generations, to be a largely successful process of rehabilitation for Hadrian.³⁴

Hadrian's Final Dynastic Arrangements

As part of his adoption compact, Antoninus had to adopt Aelius Caesar's son (and Hadrian's adoptive grandson), (born 130), as well as Marcus Aurelius (born 121), recently engaged to Verus' sister. (That marriage arrangement was annulled and modified after Hadrian's death.) It may well be that Antoninus, who was just a decade younger than Hadrian, was meant primarily as a caretaker emperor for Aelius Caesar's young son, Verus.³⁵ Yet Antoninus reigned until 161, and only then was succeeded by his adopted sons, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, as co-emperors. Verus and his wife (who was Marcus' daughter, and thus technically Verus' niece) produced a daughter in 166, shortly before his death three years later. But in his very first year on the throne, Marcus Aurelius and his wife—who was Antoninus' daughter, Faustina the Younger—saw the birth of twin sons, one of whom would live to succeed him in 180 as the emperor Commodus.

It was a complex dynastic scheme, but one that succeeded in its technical aspects to a surprising degree. And for that, Hadrian deserves credit as its ultimate architect. Surely he had such larger ambitions in mind when he first singled out L. Ceionius Commodus, a father of three, for adoption. The *Historia Augusta* alleges that Hadrian showed almost instant regret for his decision, which the author presents as yet another instance of the emperor's inconstancy. But the fact that he is said to have eliminated his nonagenarian brother-in-law (a three-time consul) and his own grandnephew for their opposition to his plans shows precisely how determined he was to make his arrangements stick.

Indeed, it has to be at least considered that Hadrian's failing health and the climate of political conflict that followed the adoption provide a possible context for the death of Sabina in 137, especially given the insistent ancient tradition that her husband forced her into suicide. Can it be that Hadrian feared that Sabina might outlive him (and thus potentially upset his arrangements), and calculated that she provided more value to the regime as *diva* than living wife? We shall explore this question in Chapter 10.

Sabina 'Augusta'

Material Sources for Sabina's First Decade as Empress

The evidence for Sabina's first decade as empress hardly permits the construction of a gripping or even coherent story. None of our main literary sources offer any dated information about Sabina, other than the fact of her marriage, until 122 CE, a full five years after her husband, Hadrian, was acclaimed emperor. So we must turn to the inscriptions, coins, and sculptures—and, to an extent, the gems—to understand how Hadrian sought to manage the public image of his wife in the earlier years of his reign. The impression one gets from this material evidence is that, following his accession in August 117 and then for almost a dozen years, the emperor made no special effort to promote Sabina. One notes in particular that the first decade of Hadrian's reign saw no coins minted in Rome and virtually none in the provinces that commemorated his wife.

Granted, it took at least 14 years after Trajan's accession for his wife, Plotina, (named 'Augusta' by 105) to appear on issues struck at Rome (see Chapter 2). And that appearance came only in the context of the emperor's larger numismatic commemoration of his family, including his long-deceased father, Trajan senior; sister, Marciana (both of whom he consecrated in 112); and niece, Matidia the Elder (that same year made *Augusta*). Provincial coinage depicting Plotina seems (largely) to have followed the lead of Rome.

When Hadrian succeeded Trajan as emperor in 117, his earliest policy focus when it came to imperial women was on aggrandizing his mother-in-law, who was Trajan's niece, Matidia the Elder, and his

adoptive mother, Plotina. Hadrian almost immediately issued a breathtaking number of issues obviously meant to show his links and loyalty to his predecessor's family. The first years of his reign, as we have noted in Chapter 5, saw more than two dozen issues that commemorated Plotina while alive and Sabina's mother, Matidia I, both alive and dead, in various obverse and reverse combinations. Meanwhile, Hadrian let Trajan's deified sister, Marciana, the mother of Matidia, drop out of view on the coins. Nor did he institutionalize his own (living) sister, Domitia Paulina, as "sister of the Augustus"—though Trajan had offered this precedent—or the like. At least some corners of the empire seem to have expected it.¹

In this period Hadrian also apparently minted no coins for his wife, Sabina, at Rome. One must say "apparently" because of the presence of an odd silver *denarius* in the collection of the British Museum. The obverse bears a laureate head of Hadrian with the legend HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS, of a type used in the years 124–125; the reverse, a bust of Sabina identified as SABINA AVGVSTI with "hair coiled and piled on top of head above triple *stephane*" (i.e., diadem). R. Abdy notes that "reading from obverse to reverse the legend seems very appropriate for an introductory coinage, since it can be translated as 'this is Sabina [wife of] the emperor Hadrian.'" Significantly, Sabina is not yet marked as AVGVSTA herself. Thus Mattingly provisionally assigned the coin to "c. A.D. 126–127 (?)," shortly before she received the title. The trouble is that the mint is uncertain: it can just as well be from one in Asia Minor as that of Rome. "If eastern," points out Abdy, "a much wider date is possible, perhaps even a descriptive reverse type proper to the last period of the reign together with an earlier obverse die."² Notwithstanding the existence of this odd and rare coin, comparisons must have been inevitable at Rome with Trajan's numismatic treatment of his wife, sister, and niece, and Hadrian's own commemoration of the living Trajanic women.

Nor are the provincial cities known to have commemorated Sabina during the first half of Hadrian's reign, with the one glaring exception—the military colony of Gaba in Galilee, which already has Sabina as *Sebaste* (= *Augusta*), on a coin minted almost certainly in the range of mid-August to mid-October 117. But it stands alone, so far as our information goes, for more than a decade.

Other media are of little help. It is only a small number of portraits, none absolutely certain in terms of identification, that possibly

predate the main run of Rome coins that start for Sabina in 128. Most significantly, there is a common view that a Venus Genetrix type from Ostia with a marked “Trajanic” hairstyle should be our earliest portrait of Sabina. Carandini for his part dated it “ca. 113.” Other attributions of sculptural portraits to the years before 128 strike one as mere educated guesses, based on general stylistic similarities combined with find spots that are alleged to correspond to points on Hadrian’s Second Journey.³

Now, from the start of Hadrian’s reign, Sabina certainly was widely known and occasionally honored as empress—indeed, sometimes as *Augusta*. But instances of early honors to Sabina with secure dates are not that numerous. At Gerasa (Arabia) in 119/120, one of its three theaters saw the dedication of a statue of Justice by a priest of the imperial cult “on behalf of the safety of the *Sebastoi*” (i.e., *Augusti*), who should be Hadrian and Sabina. (In previous years the town honored Trajan and Plotina with the same formula.) At Olisipo in Lusitania (= modern Lisbon) a public dedication that must date to the last months of 121 already refers to Sabina as *Augusta*. At Lyttos in Crete in 124/125, the town’s chief magistrate dedicated at least one pair of statues of Hadrian and Sabina, denoting her simply as the emperor’s wife (no attribution of *Sebaste*). A successor, likely in the very next year, did so as well. Perhaps contemporary is another statue that the city of Messene in the Peloponnesus dedicated “by vote of the Achaeans” to Sabina *Augusta*. What is interesting here is that Hadrian is not known to have visited either of those two latter locales. The Council and People of Ephesus made a dedication to Sabina (no title preserved) in 124. And from (apparently) 124/125 or soon after we have that isolated silver *denarius* with reverse legend SABINA AVGVSTI, which is possibly from a mint in Asia Minor rather than from Rome.⁴

And that is all we have as regards securely dated evidence for early recognition of the empress—with the exception of the base for a statue of Sabina set up in Perge in Pamphylia. Perge was a wealthy city located about 15 km from the bay of Antalya, and just a few kilometers north of the east-west road that connected the coastal cities of Attaleia (Antalya), Side, and Coracesium (Alanya). Its patron deity was Artemis Pergaea, whose cult spread throughout Pamphylia and Pisidia and beyond, even to Rome, where a temple to the goddess seems to have been established on the Quirinal hill by the mid-first century CE.⁵ This

statue of the empress Sabina at Perge formed part of an elaborate monumental group, precisely dating to the year 121. A bilingual inscription on the base describes her as *Augusta/Sebaste*. It is to this remarkable commemoration that we shall now turn.

*Plancia Magna's Honors at Perge for Hadrian
and His Extended Family*

Hadrian was not on the throne for five years when a proud notable of Perge, Plancia Magna, undertook an ambitious architectural and sculptural program to ensure that every visitor to the city would recognize her name, and understand her importance in both the local civic and wider imperial contexts.⁶ Her name itself deserves comment. The Plancii—the family name is rare—probably came to Perge from their hometown of Atina (southeast Latium) as traders in the late Republican period. The tag ‘Magna’ (literally, “the great”) is rarer still for elite women of the imperial age. Previous to Plancia Magna, only two senatorial women appear to have borne that *cognomen*, and in each case they had an actual relationship to the Pompeii Magni, the descendants of Pompey the Great. What may explain ‘Magna’ in this case is that her maternal grandfather or step-grandfather seems to have been the client king of Armenia, Tigranes VI (crowned by Nero and ruled 60–62). It is worth suggesting that she adopted the *cognomen* to evoke the title *basileus megalos* (“Great King”) that Armenian rulers—including Tigranes VI—used for themselves.⁷ However Plancia Magna acquired the name, it certainly would have struck an assertive, even grandiose tone. Eventually a member of the Plancii family was to become an empress, twice: Julia Aquilia Severa, a Vestal Virgin who—despite her prohibitive religious status—was taken as the second and fourth wife of Elagabalus (reigned 218–222).⁸

The extensive dedications at Perge to and from Plancia Magna allow us to reconstruct her basic biographical data with reasonable certainty. Her father, M. Plancius Varus, reached the Senate and advanced through the praetorship in the reign of Nero, probably established that temple to Diana (i.e., Artemis) Pergaea at Rome, and rose to the position of governor of Bithynia under Vespasian. He also married (though possibly not as his first wife) Julia, the daughter of Tigranes VI of Armenia, himself great-grandson of Herod the Great. In addition to his daughter,



FIGURE 4. City gate of Perge (Pamphylia), as restored by Plancia Magna (121 CE).

Credit: Orçun Edipoğlu/Creative Commons

Plancia Magna, there was a son, C. Plancius Varus. Whether Julia was the natural mother of one or both of these children, we do not know.⁹

Plancia Magna herself married a local notable, C. Iulius Cornutus Tertullus, the first individual from Pamphylia to reach the consulship. He was suffect consul in 100, with the younger Pliny as a colleague, whom he later succeeded as governor of Bithynia under Trajan. Plancia and her husband, Tertullus, had a son, named C. Iulius Plancius Varus Cornutus. This man too reached the Senate, and served as governor of Cilicia at some point under Hadrian.¹⁰ We can guess that Plancia Magna herself was born no later than 80 CE, and perhaps a decade or more earlier. So she was older than Sabina, perhaps significantly so. In her lifetime she accumulated some highly visible public honors at Perge, including (uniquely for a woman) the city's chief annual magistracy.¹¹

But Plancia Magna's most significant contribution to her city was a massive enhancement of the main entrance to the city (Figures 4 and 5), which faced toward the south and the Pamphylian coast. Plancia Magna set out to make the experience of entering Perge both more theatrical and controlled.¹² Early in Hadrian's principate, she remodeled the city's Hellenistic-era gate. She then extended this southern entrance on its interior side with two new architectural creations. The first was

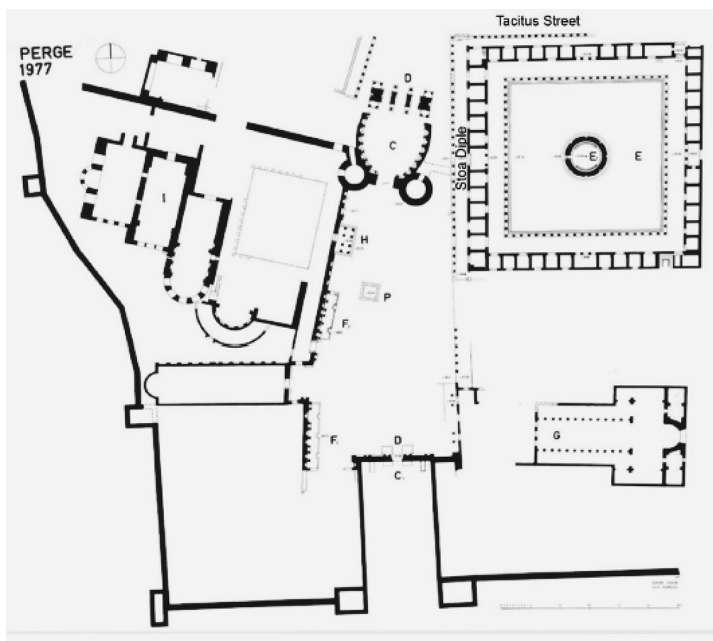


FIGURE 5. Plan of southern portion of Perge (Pamphylia), showing enhancements by Plancia Magna.

Credit: Kalinbayrak 2011, 130 fig. 43, itself adapted from S. Bulgurlu-Gün 2008, 250 fig. 1

a small, horseshoe-shaped aedicular courtyard built into the north side of the gate, two stories high and realized in the Corinthian order. The resemblance to the *scaenae frons*, the architectural scene building behind the stage in a Roman theater, was unmistakable. Here the use of marble facing was lavish, and there were niches for 14 statues on each of the two levels. The upper level featured bronze statues (now lost) of Perge's *ktistai*, or "founders," with inscribed bases. Nine of the bases survive, and they indicate that the honorands were a mix of Achaean survivors of the Trojan War, mythical local heroes, and historical personages. The last group included M. and C. Plancius Varus, identified explicitly as "father" and "brother of Plancia Magna." The lower level in Plancia Magna's original scheme may also have been devoted to *ktistai*. If so, they were later replaced by large marble statues of Olympian deities, for which fragments survive, in various sizes and very likely taken from other monuments at Perge.¹³

Then at the northern "open" end of this horseshoe, Plancia Magna erected a triple arch, again in two stories, with niches for life-size

statues and their bases. An extant inscription in Latin and Greek shows that she dedicated this assemblage not to the emperor, but rather to the *patria*, i.e., the city of Perge itself. Within the niches, the inscribed statue bases were also bilingual, with Latin taking the privileged first place. In each inscription, Plancia Magna again identifies herself as the dedicator (indeed, twice), and in the Latin version offers her filiation (“Plancia Magna, daughter of Marcus”), thereby referencing her senatorial father. Not much of the arch other than its foundations remains in situ. But ten statue bases and in some cases parts of statues that stood on the arch have been recovered. So we have a good idea of the iconographic program, and, as it happens, the bases offer a firm grasp on the date of this construction.

The triple arch in its original form seems to have displayed two goddesses of local significance—Artemis Pergaea, and the personified “Genius” (*Tyche*) of Perge (for whom a marble statue survives)—as well as four Roman emperors, and four women of the imperial house. The emperors presented were Augustus (surely specified as *divus* in lacunae that precede his name), the deified Nerva, the deified Trajan, and Hadrian. After offering his full filiation (son and grandson of the *divi* Nerva and Trajan), the base for Hadrian’s statue marks that he was in his fifth year of tribunician power, which was precisely the year 121. That information surely dates the dedication of the arch as a whole.

The statue bases of the four women are consonant with a dedication in this year. The arch displayed Trajan’s sister *diva*, Marciana, and niece *diva*, Matidia I, then Plotina with no indication of deification preceding her name like the others (but *Augusta* presumably in the lacunae that followed it), and finally Sabina *Augusta*. So these bases must have been carved in the period after late December 119, which saw the consecration of Matidia, and before the deification of Plotina, who died in late 122 or early 123, and presumably (like Marciana and Matidia) was consecrated at the first opportunity (which may have been Hadrian’s return to the city from his Second Journey in 125). On the other hand, the fact that Sabina is called *Augusta* on her base need not imply a date after 128, as other “precocious” uses of the title before its official grant go to show.¹⁴

The conceptual aim of the arch evidently was to associate the fortunes of the city to the charisma of the current imperial house, and to position Plancia Magna herself as mediator of these two worlds. Tellingly, this powerful woman had female figures outnumber those

of men on the structure,¹⁵ which served to reinforce her own insistent self-advertisement on the dedicatory statue bases. She could have added even more women relevant to Hadrian's rule. Yet she chose to stick to *divae* and *Augustae*, and—following the lead of the regime itself—declined to honor Hadrian's sister, Domitia Paulina, and Sabina's half-sister, Matidia II. One must also keep in mind that the exterior face of the arch was viewed from within that “memory theater” of city founders and benefactors that Plancia Magna had created. The four emperors depicted on the arch accounted for just a fraction of the 38 figures in that enclosed space, which more than anything forcefully evoked city history and identity, not to mention the personality of Plancia Magna.

It is possible (though unattested) that Hadrian and Sabina visited Perge in 131, as they made their way on the Third Journey from Egypt toward Athens. If so, they personally would have experienced this ambitious architectural complex.¹⁶ Yet Plancia Magna's arch saw even later updating. Excavations near the monumental arch have revealed a statue of Hadrian in a cuirass, another of Sabina similar in its carving details but of a style associated with the time of her deification ca. 137, and (apparently) a statue of Faustina II. The Hadrian and Sabina statues cannot have been original to the inscribed bases of 121 belonging to the arch, and there is no base at all extant for the Faustina.

What is more, as J. Trimble argues, the Sabina and Faustina statues share not only the same sculptural body type (that of the Large Herculaneum Woman) but also a similar treatment of the hair. She suggests that the Sabina is an addition to the arch in the 140s and the Faustina II in the 160s, but that a deliberate visual connection was fashioned between the two.

The surprising thing is that “both also referred visually to the . . . Large Herculanean Woman portrait of Plancia Magna,” set up in Perge by one of her freedmen in an unknown context, but moved and reinstalled during the Severan period to a display wall just outside the Hellenistic gate she had refurbished. “This may or may not have been an intentional similarity,” continues Trimble. “But viewers in Perge experienced this as a visual repetition every time they entered the gate complex.”¹⁷ It can be added that the portraits of Sabina and Plancia Magna were each larger than life, with the empress depicted only slightly taller (by 8 cm) than the Pergaeian noble. In that sense, Plancia Magna's portrait communicated well her relative importance in her home city—and reminds us that she was the ultimate honorand in her lavish building projects.

With that somewhat lengthy case study of honors to Sabina at Perge, we unfortunately can close our survey of the material evidence on the earlier years of the empress. It remains to examine the vexing scraps on this period that have come to us in the literary sources, which relate first to Sabina's life in the context of Hadrian's court, and then to her belated elevation to the position of 'Augusta.' The chapter concludes with some observations on the regime's impressive effort to present the portrait of Sabina on a mass scale immediately after she gained that distinction.

A Glimpse of Domestic Life from Hadrian's Early Principate?

An odd passage has come to us as part of the bundle of works once wholly ascribed to the fourth-century grammarian Dositheus. The first part of this bundle is Dositheus' grammatical treatise on the Greek language, written in Latin with accompanying Greek translation, with portions offering a select Greek-Latin glossary. Its audience seems to have been speakers of Greek who wished to learn Latin.¹⁸ The second part, the *Hermeneumata* ("Interpretations" or "Translations"), has nothing to do with Dositheus, but is what concerns us here. For among its contents are two versions of a bilingual "Opinions and Letters of the Deified Hadrian" (= *Divi Hadriani Sententiae et Epistulae*). These collections consist mostly of anecdotes concerned with Hadrian's responses to claims and petitions, many of a fascinatingly mundane sort from quite ordinary people. In the longer of the two versions, among the legal anecdotes is found a purported letter of Hadrian as emperor to his mother that mentions Sabina.¹⁹ The letter, which reads like a workaday Latin original with translation into Greek—though the opposite is also conceivable—is short enough to quote in full:

Rejoice, mother best and most dear. For as much as you entreat the gods on my behalf, do I also entreat them on yours. For your piety and chastity accomplish all things. Nonetheless I rejoice, by Hercules, since the things that I accomplish are all pleasing and praiseworthy to you. Well you know, mother, that this very day is my birthday, and we ought in turn to dine together. So if you wish, having

bathed, come early with my sisters. For Sabina has set off for the villa. But she sent a lunch-basket. Therefore make sure that you come rather quickly, so that we can together celebrate the wished-for (day).

There is not much within the letter to attach it to Hadrian other than reference to Sabina. It seems safe to say that this celebration is envisaged as taking place in Rome, from the mention of Sabina having headed to a (country) villa. But several pressing questions immediately intrude. First, the birthday of Hadrian was celebrated as a major public event (indeed, well into the fourth century). For example, we know that he marked his 43rd birthday in 119—the first he spent in Rome as emperor—by exhibiting expensive entertainments in the theater and circus, and six successive days of gladiatorial shows in the city. This or another birthday (the year is not preserved) saw cash disbursements in distant Phrygia. How much credence should we place in this scenario of a small private party?

Next, who is the “mother” here addressed? We know almost nothing of Hadrian’s biological mother except that the *Historia Augusta* says her name was Domitia Paulina; she was born at Gades in Spain; and her husband, (P.) Aelius Hadrianus Afer, died when their son, the future emperor, was aged ten. The couple also had a daughter, who too had the name Domitia Paulina. As it happens, Hadrian’s father and mother find mention, though not by name, in a papyrus written in the second century CE, which transmits a supposed deathbed communication from the emperor in the year 138 to his successor, Antoninus. Here Hadrian states “my natural father . . . passed away as a private citizen, having lived 40 years, so that I have outlived my father by half and reached almost the same age as my mother.” Hadrian’s dates of birth and death are secure: he lived from 24 January 76 to 10 July 138, and died aged 62.²⁰ Taking these data at face value, we can assign to Hadrian’s father the dates ca. 46–86, and to his wife Domitia Paulina a birthdate of ca. 60 at the latest and a lifespan of something more than 62 years. So it is certainly possible that she lived into her son’s reign and indeed into the mid-120s.

The point of all this? It is technically possible that the elder Domitia Paulina was (or was made to be) the recipient of the birthday invitation under consideration. The alternative is that it is Plotina, Hadrian’s adoptive mother after 117, who lived until (apparently) the year 122 or

early 123. Most authorities who have discussed this letter assume it is Plotina who is meant, though some take Domitia Paulina to be the “mother,” in each case without argument.²¹

Of course, we have a date for the putative birthday celebration. It has to be 24 January of a year when Hadrian was in Rome and not on one of his journeys. That leaves the years 119 (but that was the year of massive public celebrations), 120 or 121; 126 through 128; and (for the sake of completeness) 134 through 138. The first of these ranges seems possible for either Domitia Paulina or Plotina. We also have a candidate for the location of the villa to which Sabina removed herself, in January, no less: Tibur (modern Tivoli), where Hadrian constructed his famous retreat, and where Sabina’s family seems to have had its own preexisting country home.²²

There is one sticking point that makes one wonder whether it is worth discussing this letter at all as a serious piece of evidence: Hadrian’s entreaty to his mother to come to the birthday party with his “sisters.” It is only the younger Domitia Paulina who is attested as Hadrian’s sister. Making sense of the text requires some mental gymnastics. This puzzling detail may simply be evidence of a forger showing his hand.²³

It seems the historical value of this “letter” must remain an open question, with the preponderance of the evidence arguing against inclusion in reliable testimonia. However, even if we consider it an exercise in historical fiction, one notes the basic point that this text has the emperor Hadrian excusing the absence of his wife, Sabina, on the occasion of a personal celebration he evidently deemed important.

Did Sabina Accompany Hadrian on his Second Journey (121–125)?

We know of another birthday that Hadrian celebrated, this time with great planning and expense, and doubtless in person. It was the anniversary of Romulus’ founding of the city of Rome, traditionally dated to 21 April, a festival date known as the Parilia. For its 874th instance in the year 121, Hadrian reconstituted the festival, and for the occasion started a news series of games in the Circus that must have been spectacular. A coin issue in gold and bronze marks the event, on the reverse even noting the precise calendar date, with the year noted in Roman numerals. On the same day Hadrian also inaugurated the site

of the massive double temple he was to build to Rome and Venus, on the Velia with its eastern end across from the Flavian Amphitheatre (Colosseum). Henceforth the festival of 21 April came to be known (at least for Greeks) as the *Romaia*, with a refocused dedication to the Fortune of the city of Rome.²⁴ All this pageantry seems to have been staged as prelude to the emperor's Second Journey, which was to remove him from Rome for most of the next four years.

The aims of that Second Journey (if not its details) can be reconstructed with a fair degree of confidence. "Germany was no doubt his real goal—and Britain," argues A. R. Birley. "He wanted to settle the north-western provinces in person, and had plans for the frontiers. . . . There was much to inspect: not merely the two German provinces, but Raetia and Noricum as well . . . it is probable enough that he already intended to conclude with a visit to Spain and to the North African provinces, an inspection of the remaining Latin part of the empire, completing what had been taken in 118 [i.e., in the east]." ²⁵

Hadrian in a year and a half managed to complete much of that ambitious agenda. He first passed through Gaul, and devoted significant attention to the Upper Danubian and (especially) Rhine provinces. In 122 he crossed to Britain. There the emperor seems to have personally supervised the building of a great military bridge across the river Tyne (named the Pons Aelius), as well as the first stages of construction of a man-made frontier—the famous wall that today bears his name. It was built from the Tyne near the North Sea to the Solway Firth on the Irish Sea, "along a length of 80 miles, to separate barbarians and Romans," as the *Historia Augusta* tells us (the only literary source to mention this wall).

Hadrian next passed back through Gaul, and spent winter of 122/123 at Tarraco in eastern Spain; the *Historia Augusta* cites Marius Maximus for a meeting he called there with representatives of all the Spanish communities. It was also at Tarraco, it seems, that Hadrian received news of the death of his adoptive mother, Plotina, who surely had remained behind in Rome. In early 123, an uprising in Mauretania had to be quelled, perhaps by the emperor in person.

But Hadrian was unable to accomplish anything more in Spain or North Africa at this time, for the prospect of a war with Parthia soon summoned him to the east. We do not know by what route the emperor traveled to Syria, though he probably arrived there by June 123. The *Historia Augusta* simply states that he was able to put the Parthian

threat to rest with a “colloquy,” one assumes on the Euphrates with the Arsacid king Osroes I (as opposed to his rival, Vologaeses III, whose power base was farther to the east).

This source then sums up the next two years of travel in a few clauses. “After this Hadrian travelled by way of Asia and the islands to Greece, and, following the example of Hercules and Philip, had himself initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries. He bestowed many favors on the Athenians and sat as president of the public games. . . . Afterwards he sailed to Sicily. . . Thence he returned to Rome.” And so Hadrian’s Second Journey ended, in what must be spring 125.²⁶

A proper discussion of the details of this Second Journey would take us far from our central subject. For the evidence is slight that Sabina accompanied her husband, even on the portion of his travels that took him to the west. General descriptions of Hadrian’s entourage in traversing the provinces are largely lacking, and no textual source specifically mentions the participation of imperial women in any of his travels, except (as we shall see in Chapter 7) his sister, Domitia Paulina, in Egypt. The *Epitome de Caesaribus*, in praising the emperor’s energy, states that Hadrian typically traveled at the head of a “column of companions” and then describes—with obvious hyperbole—how he formally organized into quasi-military cohorts “craftsmen, surveyors, architects, and the whole tribe of those who construct or embellish walls.” The summarizer of Dio Cassius stresses that the emperor took care to preserve an air of military simplicity on his journeys.

Material evidence gets us only so far, at least for the Second Journey. We have noted the dedication of statues and the like to Sabina at Olisipo in Lusitania (dated to 121), Perge in Pamphylia (also 121), Lyttos in Crete (124/125 and perhaps 125/126), Ephesus (124), and (perhaps from this same era) Messene in the Peloponnesus. But there is no necessary connection between such dedications and the empress’s actual presence at the locations in question, as the example of Plancia Magna’s elaborate honors to the imperial family at Perge in 121—when Hadrian was demonstrably in the west—goes to show.²⁷

Significantly, there is nothing from Athens honoring Sabina that can definitely be assigned to this period. Hadrian had an extended stay there in 124/125, where he seems to have done quite a lot—very probably using this occasion for a comprehensive revision of the laws of Athens.²⁸ The *Historia Augusta*, as we have seen, mentions just three items, but

they provide a chronology that hints at the length of his presence in Athens: initiation in at least the first grade of the (Greater) Mysteries at Eleusis “following the example of Hercules and Philip” (which we should expect in the latter half of the Athenian month of Boedromion, i.e., September/October, of the year 124); unspecified benefactions to the city; and presidency of the Dionysia (which would have come in March 125).

One distortion, however, demands comment. The biographer, it seems, has deliberately perverted the first of those notices, on Eleusis—perhaps because it obviously held central importance for Hadrian. Surely it was not Hercules and (Athens’ enemy) Philip II of Macedon who provided the precedent. Rather, it must have been two old friends of Hadrian, the well-connected cousins (C. Iulius Eurycles) Herculanus of Sparta and (C. Iulius Antiochus Epiphanes) Philopappus (*cos. suff.* 109) (Figure 6), a descendant of the Seleucids, and who had long resided at Athens. Hadrian had become an Athenian citizen through Philopappus’ agency and, like Philopappus, had exercised simultaneously the Athenian archonship and the position of *agonothetes* (“supervisor of games”) in 111/112 or (more probably) 112/113.



FIGURE 6. Athens: monument of C. Iulius Antiochus Epiphanes Philopappus (*cos. suff.* 109), brother of poet Julia Balbilla (ca. 115 CE).

Credit: Carole Raddato/Creative Commons

Philopappus was one of the outstanding personalities in Athens in his day, and (as we shall see in Chapter 8) was demonstrably known to Sabina. He was the direct descendent of the rulers of the small but wealthy kingdom of Commagene, located in eastern Anatolia with a border on the Euphrates, which the Romans had annexed in 72 CE. We have excellent evidence on Philopappus' self-conception, in the form of his two-storied funerary monument, still quite conspicuous at the summit of the Hill of the Muses in Athens, where the tomb rises up in explicit competition with the Acropolis. This flamboyant tomb was within the city walls and (most unusually) at a height, so surely built by special dispensation. As it happens, it is one of the few grand construction projects in Athens in the first and early second centuries CE, a time of local cultural and economic recession. It is telling that the travel writer Pausanias, in his minute description of the topography and antiquities of Athens that he published a generation later, pointedly ignores this intrusion into the city's skyline. Scholars have long suspected that the chief architectural source for this amazing structure is none other than the massive tomb that Philopappus' ancestor, King Antiochus I (reigned ca. 70–ca. 36 BCE), built for himself in Commagene. That was situated on Nemrud Dagħ, the highest peak in the kingdom (2200 m in altitude), and was clearly visible from his capital city of Samosata.

The form of Philopappus' Athens monument is a concave confectio whose main architectural source is a single-bay Roman triumphal arch—indeed, the arch of Titus in Rome, which commemorated that emperor's role in quelling the Jewish revolt in 70 CE. Sited in its obnoxiously unavoidable position, Philopappus' tomb illustrates his titles, dynastic pretensions, overlapping cultural identities, and achievements. On the upper level, Philopappus' seated statue (with nude chest, and the Greek cloak known as the *himation* covering him below) is flanked by images of the Alexander successor Seleucus I (now missing) as well as that of his grandfather, Antiochus IV, who lost Commagene in 72—an arrangement surely meant to signify that Philopappus was the last of the Seleucid line. On the lower level he is depicted in a frieze directly dependent on the one that decorates the northern interior side of the Titus arch, as a togate figure driving a chariot (from right to left) accompanied by the 12 attendants known as lictors, an instantly identifiable attribute of his consulship. A program of inscriptions advertised his most important titles, underlining his simultaneous identity

as Commagenian king, Athenian citizen of the deme of Besa (in which Hadrian too was enrolled), and Roman consul and Arval priest.

It is unlikely, though not impossible, that Philopappus was still alive at the time when Hadrian underwent his initiation at Eleusis and then wintered in Athens in 124/125. But Philopappus' cousin Herculanus certainly was, as well as Philopappus' sister, Julia Balbilla, a serious poet who closely emulated the great seventh-century BCE poet Sappho (down to reviving her long-defunct Lesbian dialect). Both these individuals surely joined Hadrian during his stay in Athens. As we shall see in Chapter 8, Balbilla was close enough to the emperor that she accompanied Hadrian and Sabina (and for that matter, Antinoös) on an important portion of their Third Journey, that which brought them to Egypt in the year 130.²⁹

*Sabina in the Midst of Scandal: The Incident
of Septicius Clarus and Suetonius*

Indeed, we have only one reference to Sabina's whereabouts in the period of the Second Journey. In fact, it constitutes the single best-known anecdote involving the empress, and consequently has generated a significant amount of (inconclusive) discussion. The *Historia Augusta* wedges between terse notices of Hadrian's arrival and activities in Britain and departure from the island an incident that involves Sabina and two senior members of the imperial circle, each of whom was a noted literary figure. It is the first substantive mention of Sabina in the Hadrian biography. The passage is important enough for our study to quote in its full context, with a glimpse at the original Latin as well.

[Hadrian] removed from office Septicius Clarus, the prefect of the guard (*praefecto praetorii*), and Suetonius Tranquillus, the imperial secretary (*epistularum magistro*), and many others besides, because they had been conducting themselves in their relations with his wife, Sabina, at that time in a fashion more familiar than reverence for the imperial court demanded (*quod apud Sabinam uxorem in [i]us[s]u eius familiaris tunc egerant quam reverentia domus aulicae postulabat*). And, as he was himself wont to say, he would have sent away his wife too, on the ground of ill-temper and irritability

(*ut morosam et asperam*), had he been merely a private citizen. Moreover, his vigilance was not confined to his own household but extended to those of his friends, and by means of his private agents (*per frumentarios*) he even pried into all their secrets, and so skilfully that they were never aware that the Emperor was acquainted with their private lives until he revealed it himself.

An anecdote follows, illustrating how the *frumentarii* were able to learn the contents of a letter one of Hadrian's friends received from his wife.

And, indeed, as for this habit of Hadrian's, men regard it as a most grievous fault, and add to their criticism the statements which are current regarding the passion for males and the adulteries with married women to which he is said to have been addicted, adding also the charge that he did not even keep faith with his friends.

The point that the *Historia Augusta* is eager to convey, as so often, is that Hadrian exhibited a contradictory and indeed hypocritical nature. Though the emperor engaged widely in improper sexual liaisons, we are told, he felt no compunction in spying into the most private affairs of members of his circle and confronting them with what he had learned. It is said that Hadrian terminated key officials in his circle when he learned that they had disrespected his wife—but also that he was in the habit of saying she herself merited divorce because of her personality.

Central to the passage is the role of the *frumentarii*, military personnel whose responsibilities evolved from exacting wheat and other provisions for the Roman army, to performing reconnaissance and carrying confidential messages. Some evidently served as spies for various emperors—how much earlier than Hadrian, we do not know. Though not explicitly stated here, it does seem implied that the *frumentarii* brought to Hadrian the news of whatever had transpired between Sabina and his top officials. Irritatingly, there is a slight textual problem in the crucial clause in which the rationale is presented for Hadrian's far-reaching dismissal of his staff members. The manuscripts read *uniussu eius*, corrected in one to *iniussu eius*. So they had either misbehaved “in their relations with his wife” (reading *in usu eius*), or “without his (alternately, her) consent” (*iniussu eius*)—or something else.³⁰

What certainly leaps to the eye is the collocation of the biographer and antiquarian (C.) Suetonius Tranquillus—one of the outstanding literary figures of his age, now said to be serving as Hadrian’s *ab epistulis*, i.e., correspondence secretary—and the praetorian prefect (C.) Septicius Clarus. A fragmentary inscription from Hippo Regius (in modern Algeria) honors Suetonius, and confirms service as [*ab e*]pistulis under Hadrian as the highest and last of his posts. It also is independently stated that Suetonius dedicated the most important of his many and diverse works, his *Lives of the Caesars*, in a preface (now lost) to Septicius Clarus. So the stated personal link between the two was real. Indeed, the author of the *Historia Augusta* demonstrates a strong interest in Suetonius as writer of imperial biographies. He explicitly claims Marius Maximus and Suetonius (in that order) as chief literary models, and invokes or alludes to Suetonius on any number of occasions. There should be no doubt that in this instance he had access to good information.³¹

Questions abound, however. First, what does it mean that Septicius Clarus and Suetonius (and apparently others) had violated the dignity of the court by “conducting themselves in an excessively familiar fashion” in Sabina’s presence? The conjunction of words in the crucial phrase has no exact parallel in Latin. And as it happens, the *Historia Augusta* uses only the comparative degree of *familiaris* (adjective) or *familiariter* (adverb) in the Hadrian biography. It occurs twice in addition to our passage, each time in a critique of Hadrian’s morals. It is alleged that when the young Hadrian “was rather familiar in the court” of Trajan, multiple authorities held that he bribed the imperial freedmen and in this way gained sexual access to youthful male slaves. And he is described as joining Trajan’s staff in the First Dacian War on “rather intimate terms,” with Hadrian himself cited as the source for lavish financial rewards that Trajan granted him—for his prowess as a drinking companion.

Whatever Septicius and Suetonius did “with excessive familiarity” is said to have taken place in the presence of Sabina. The offense, as A. R. Birley tentatively suggests, may have involved an inappropriate literary reading. The suggestion is attractive, given the identities of the main perpetrators, the fact that some of Suetonius’ attested works were clearly salacious in content, and the notice that “many others” are said to have been involved. But this must remain a guess, although a good one. Alternative explanations might involve reports

of illicit sex, an attempted political coup, or both. One notes a statement in the *Historia Augusta* life of Lucius Verus, in which the *familiaritas* between Verus and his sister Ceionia Fabia had grown so great that there was suspicion they would conspire against his co-emperor, Marcus Aurelius.

Was the scandal triggered in Rome or outside the city? And precisely when? On the face of things, the position of this anecdote in the *Historia Augusta* suggests Britain, and thus the year 122. Whatever the date—scholars have argued for various years in the range 120 through 128, and for locations that include Britain, Rome, Campania, and even north Africa—a setting for the incident outside the city would not be impossible. The presence of one praetorian prefect and the correspondence secretary in an imperial entourage is positively expected. And it is also plausible that the emperor had his wife accompany him for at least part of the extensive travels of the Second Journey. Yet it is also implied that Hadrian learned of the incident (whatever it was) through informers, and so was elsewhere. Finally, the upshot. What “successors” did the emperor name in place of Septicius and Suetonius? The *Historia Augusta* does not offer names, and the balance of evidence suggests that Hadrian henceforth continued with just one praetorian prefect for the rest of his reign, Septicius’ colleague Q. Marcius Turbo.³²

Unfortunately, our passage does not allow much latitude for confident analysis, especially in view of that uncertain reading in the text. Only a few reasonably secure points emerge. The empress might have interacted in Hadrian’s apparent absence with high officials of the court, probably (but not certainly) as part of his traveling entourage. Yet in one case something that went terribly wrong led to a major (in some respects permanent) shakeup of Hadrian’s inner circle. But Sabina herself experienced no conspicuous repercussions. We can go a bit further. The business, whatever it was, that led to the dismissal of one of Hadrian’s praetorian prefects and his correspondence secretary would have confronted the emperor with a truism of the imperial system, namely, that the empress’s personal status in itself made her independently powerful and dangerous. Perhaps the incident constituted enough of a turning point that Hadrian henceforth insisted on Sabina’s presence on his extensive travels. If so, positive evidence is lacking until some way into the Third Journey, specifically in November 130, when Sabina is confirmed as Hadrian’s companion in Egypt.

Given the paucity of our literary evidence on Sabina, it comes as a surprise to see that fully four authorities dating from the late fourth to the early ninth centuries state both that Hadrian was named *pater patriae* ("father of the fatherland") and his wife *Augusta*. But these sources give three different dates and none specify Sabina by name. Jerome in his translation (published ca. 378) of the *Chronicle* of Eusebius puts the honors in the year 128: "emperor Hadrian is named 'father of the fatherland' and his wife Augusta." Orosius in his *History against the Pagans* (written 416–418) embellishes a bit, but apparently places the distinction in 117/118: "[Hadrian] straightaway was named 'father of the fatherland' in the Senate, going beyond accepted precedent, and his wife 'Augusta.'"

Finally, there are two Byzantine-era sources. The seventh-century chronicle known as the *Chronicon paschale* (assembled between 631 and 641) has it that 126 was the year "the emperor Hadrian was named 'Father of his Country' and his wife 'Augusta.'" But the chronicle's compiler had just mentioned that Antinoöpolis was founded in 122 (i.e., demonstrably eight years too soon) so his reckoning is immediately open to suspicion. The monk George Syncellus, writing his chronology about 810, follows the *Chronicon paschale* almost verbatim on the point of the honors for the emperor and his wife, but does not offer a precise date within Hadrian's reign.³³

Before we try to sort out the date, a thumbnail review of some of the essentials of these two titles may be useful. The charismatic appellation *pater patriae*, properly conferred by the Senate, bestowed no special powers but had been regarded as a culminating honor for emperors since the time of Augustus. That emperor seems to have refused the title *pater patriae* on numerous occasions over the first 25 years of his reign before a dramatic final acceptance on 5 February 2 BCE. Though Tiberius ostentatiously spurned the honor altogether, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, and Trajan each took the title within a year or so of coming to the throne. Nerva was the first to take it at the very time of accession, but no emperor seems to have followed his example until Pertinax in 193.³⁴

So it is odd that Orosius says Hadrian "straightaway" received the title *pater patriae*, allegedly "going beyond accepted precedent." The thought here seems to be that previous emperors, following the

example of Augustus, traditionally refused an offer of the title at accession. For what it is worth, the *Historia Augusta* says Hadrian did precisely that: he declined being named *pater patriae* at the time of his accession, and then again afterward, “on the grounds that Augustus belatedly earned this title.” The *Historia Augusta* does not indicate that Hadrian later relented.³⁵

As for *Augusta*, strictly speaking it is not a title but rather an honorary *cognomen*. In Chapters 1 and 2 we traced the development of this title. It was the proliferation of *Augustae* under the Flavians that had a decisive attenuating effect on the original meaning of the distinction. For we soon see assumption of the titles *pater patriae* and *Augusta*—which properly have no intrinsic relationship to each other—become closely linked, and the latter also definitely extended to an emperor’s sister. In his *Panegyricus* to Trajan in the year 100, the younger Pliny praises the emperor’s wife, Plotina, and his sister, Marciana, for each strenuously refusing the title of *Augusta*, which the Senate had offered them, so long as Trajan declined to be called *pater patriae*. By the time this speech was delivered, Trajan indeed had accepted the appellation. As we have seen, the two women for their part before long are attested as *Augustae*, by 105 at the latest. Trajan maintained paired *Augustae* in his house for the remainder of his reign. When Marciana died and was deified in 112, her daughter, Matidia the Elder—the mother of Sabina—quickly was made *Augusta* alongside Plotina. These *Augustae*, Matidia I and Plotina, lived into the reign of Hadrian, to 119 and 122/123, respectively.

Sabina was the next to accept that title, in coordination, it seems, with Hadrian’s naming as *pater patriae*. But when was that? The year 128 that Jerome offers for the elevation is almost certainly the correct one, confirmed by the copious external evidence of coins and inscriptions—which incidentally suggest that Sabina was first created *Augusta*, and then Hadrian *pater patriae*. We shall turn to that material in a moment.

This question of chronology is an important one. To this point, no wife of a living emperor had such a markedly delayed introduction as *Augusta*—in Sabina’s case, in the 11th year of her husband’s principate. This delay would have heightened the public impact of the declaration. But surely gossiping tongues were wagging in the interim. One wonders whether there was ever a gap in Hadrian’s principate when Rome had no *Augusta*. It is necessary to keep in mind that Domitian’s widow, Domitia Longina, an *Augusta* since 81, seems to have lived until at least

the year 126. It would be useful to know whether she was alive or dead in 128. If recently deceased, her death would have thrown into especially high relief the decision finally for Sabina to take up the designation of *Augusta*, now wholly vacant for the first time in almost 50 years.³⁶

Sabina as 'Augusta': The Coin Legends

Once Sabina was styled 'Augusta' in 128, at Rome and in the eastern provinces there was an avalanche of types bearing her image and name, unprecedented for any Roman woman in terms of scale. At Rome, R. Abdy has identified over 100 in all, in gold, silver, and copper alloy, from Sabina's lifetime and following her death and divinization. A hoard from Castagnaro (near Verona) that was closed just after the year 128 CE confirms what we might already expect, that Sabina's coinage had commenced by then. Once the minting had started in earnest, the volume is impressive, too. Hoard evidence from Reka Devnia (northeastern Bulgaria) for the silver coinage suggests that the production runs for Sabina's types ran 50% longer than for those of Hadrian in the same period. Hadrian's policy in this regard seems to have set a trend, for subsequent empresses (Faustina I under Antoninus Pius, Faustina II under Marcus Aurelius, and Crispina under Commodus) received outputs two or even three times those of the corresponding emperor.³⁷

Progressive changes on Sabina's coins in the obverse legends and her fashion hold out the promise of establishing a chronology once minting had started in earnest in 128.³⁸ First, the legends, which fall into three basic groups on coins issued by the central mint at Rome (for which see the chart in Appendix 1): SABINA AVGVSTA specified as wife of Hadrian, with his titles represented in assorted ways; SABINA AVGVSTA standing alone; and the posthumous DIVA AVG (or AVGVSTA) SABINA. There is no chronological difficulty with the third (*diva*) group, with eight different types in gold, silver, or bronze, but none in the lowest denominations (*dupondii* and *asses*, i.e., one-eighth and one-sixteenth of a *denarius*). These coins obviously must all follow her death.

For now we shall restrict ourselves to the relationship of the first two categories. Are they consecutive or concurrent? As it happens, for the first group, there are three variants, each marking Sabina as

wife of Hadrian Augustus, variously omitting or including his titles ‘Imperator’ and “father of the fatherland.” Of these variants, the first two found quite limited production: SABINA AVGVSTA IMP(eratoris) HADRIANI AVG(usti), found on four bronze types (*sestertii*, i.e., one-quarter of a *denarius*, or *dupondii/asses*); then SABINA AVGVSTA IMP(eratoris) HADRIANI AVG(usti) P(atris) P(atriae), on two gold types; and then SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG(usti) P(atris) P(atriae), seen on 65 types in all metals.³⁹

Sabina’s coins in the first two groups, which share the short-lived IMP(erator) in Hadrian’s titulature, form a cluster. Their reverses depict either a seated Vesta holding the Palladium and scepter (a type used also for Titus’ daughter, Julia; her uncle; and her husband, Domitian, as well as both Trajan and Plotina), or Ceres seated on a basket while she is holding grain ears and a torch (a new design). And in each case there is no identifying legend for the figure. This omission is noteworthy, for only about a quarter of Sabina’s types lack one.

If we leave aside other considerations for the moment, the fact that in the first group (all bronzes) *pater patriae* does not appear in Hadrian’s titulature, but on the closely related second group (*aurei*) it does, suggests that the types with these obverse legends date precisely to the year he received the distinction, namely, the year 128. It also surprisingly reveals an important historical item: Sabina received the honor of *Augusta* before Hadrian was named *pater patriae*. One suspects that the main point of this sequence was to heighten the drama of the emperor accepting his title. Still, the fact that the two grants came in close connection strongly symbolized imperial unity.

If further support is needed, it is provided by the large silver pieces known as *cistophori* (literally, “basket bearing”) struck by various mints in the province of Asia. These coins had the value of three Roman *denarii*, and (unusually for Anatolia) carried Latin legends. They had a long history, which predated Rome’s annexation of western Asia Minor as a province in 133 BCE. They got their name from their traditional reverse image, which showed (in various permutations and degrees of stylization) a basket sacred to Dionysus from which issued a snake. The Triumviral period ushered in a period of experimentation in the cistophoric reverse types, which Augustus as emperor completed by dispensing with the sacred basket altogether. From that point, the *cistophori*—though meant for local use in Asia—had the appearance of fully Roman coins, except in regard to size and weight.

Let us return to the era of Hadrian. Two silver cistophoric coins from an Asian mint have AVGVSTV(s) HADRIANVS (without *pater patriae*) on the obverse, and feature on the reverse the legend SABINA AVGVSTA. All other coins of this cistophoric type from Asian mints that portray Sabina Augusta give Hadrian the title *pater patriae*. She must have received her honor first. The images on the reverses also demand comment. One has a seated Fortuna, apparently assimilated to Sabina (the goddess does not wear her expected cylindrical headdress), holding a rudder and cornucopia. The type is closely derived from a characteristic reverse in Hadrian's Roman coinage, where the legend FORT(unae) RED(uci) is regularly added: "to Fortune who leads back" (s.c., safely from a journey). The other portrays Sabina as Pietas, seated and holding a *patera* (a shallow libation bowl) and scepter. In Chapter 7 we shall return to the point that Sabina's and Hadrian's assumption of their titles was very much prolegomena to a new sequence of imperial travels.⁴⁰

As regards the remaining obverse legends, it appears the SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG P P and SABINA AVGVSTA groups were introduced in that order, but are then found concurrently in Sabina's lifetime. These legends seem to imply only that they postdate the earliest group of her coinage. But greater precision is possible. The absence of the contracted SABINA AVGVSTA version from the Erla hoard found near Linz (777 gold and silver coins closed ca. 136) strongly suggests a date late in Sabina's lifetime for its introduction. It also appears that the contracted version was first restricted to the gold and silver, and only later extended to bronze *dupondii* and *asses*.⁴¹

First Portraits for Sabina 'Augusta'

Next, we look at the implications of changes of fashion for chronology. As R. M. Nicolai has observed, "the element of novelty that has most attracted the interest of scholars occupied with Sabina is the variety of the hairstyles that one finds on the coin issues. The *Augustae* who preceded Sabina were represented in only one way or at most with some small variants." Nor is it just the arrangement of hair that merits attention. For instance, Nicolai herself has identified five different crowns that Sabina wears on her coinage at Rome.⁴²

The Castagnaro hoard (sealed by early 129) helps us identify what is an indisputably an earlier style of representing Sabina as *Augusta* on

the coins, namely, with hair piled up in a fashion that recalls that of her mother, Matidia the Elder. This style is how she is portrayed, for instance, on the anomalous SABINA AVGVSTA *denarius* in the British Museum, and on the Rome types with the two earliest obverse legend types that we have shown must belong to 128.

A. Carandini in his detailed study of the iconography of Sabina considered her coinage (which he agreed commences only in 128) to show four basic hairstyles in all. (I leave aside here his suggested sub-categories.) First, what Carandini calls the “turban,” reminiscent of Matidia I, with Sabina’s hair elaborately braided, coiled, and piled on the back of her head behind a (metallic) tiara. Second, the “Plotina,” where the hair is unbraided. Here a tiara (sometimes even composed of vegetal elements) holds her hair in such a way that it rises in a crest in front. In the back, Sabina’s hair is formed in a ponytail fastened, just before the end, by a narrow ribbon, so as to form a slight bulge at the bottom. Carandini identified as Sabina’s third basic hairstyle the “bun.” The hair is combed back naturally and collected in a loose knot on the back of the head; a diadem or wreath surrounds this nest. Carandini points out that this style is common on coins, but seemingly is never found on gems and rarely in statuary. He suggests it had a religious significance and should be linked with Eleusis and the assimilation of Sabina to Demeter and Persephone. Finally, there is a hairstyle unique to representations of the deified Sabina. It is essentially that of the third style (the “bun”), with the addition of a veil. “The presence of a crown of wheat-ears confirms the assimilation to Ceres.”⁴³

But the development of Sabina’s hair fashions may be even more subtle and complex. It will be seen that R. Abdy’s scheme (see Appendix 1) identifies seven distinct hairstyles for Sabina on the coins. And the changes he posits are not exactly sequential. The evidence is complicated, and will occupy us in Chapter 9. It should be noted, however, that he recognizes just one general hairstyle for the period when Sabina was named Augusta (i.e., 128) and just afterward. It was the visit to Egypt in 130, he suggests, that occasioned the first great shift in her hairstyle.⁴⁴

The sculptures, like the coins minted at Rome, may start in earnest only in 128, with Sabina’s naming as *Augusta*. We have seen it is only a single portrait from Ostia of Sabina in the guise of Venus Genetrix that plausibly can be held to predate the Rome coins; S. Wood notes that numismatic images of the empress offer no parallel for the hairstyle.

B. Adembri, like Carandini before her, rightly uses Sabina's coins minted at Rome to sort out the chronology of the sculptures, and finds real development in the promulgation of her image. Sabina's numismatic portrait in its earliest phase, explains Adembri, is marked by hairstyles—in numerous variants—that deliberately sought to evoke her grandmother Marciana and mother, Matidia, as well as her adoptive mother-in-law, Plotina. The notion was to emphasize the links with the family of Trajan, with Sabina as a “guarantee of descent in the maternal line.”

As sculptural parallels for the coins that show affinities to the early “Marciana” and “Matidia” hairstyles, Adembri points toward a set of about a half-dozen Sabina portraits, remarkably diverse in terms of scale and provenance. They include two statues (a striking one from Vaison-la-Romaine in what had been Gallia Narbonensis and another from Carthage), a colossal head (perhaps from Ostia), plus two busts and a relief head (two of which were discovered at Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli). To this group Adembri admits possibly also the unusual “Venus Genetrix” statue from Ostia—but on the shaky grounds that the goddess shows up in this guise on the reverse of some of Sabina's coins (and demonstrably not the earliest ones). For the “Plotina” style, Adembri adduces a head now in Rome's Musei Capitolini.⁴⁵

An examination of the gems and cameos confirms this general picture, that Sabina's portrait was not in widespread circulation before she was named *Augusta*. A. Carandini provisionally organized the precious stones that indeed seem to feature Sabina into two main stylistic classes. One he considers to show a “Romano-western” approach that emphasizes realism in portraiture, though admitting some degree of idealization. The other Carandini describes as exhibiting a “Greco-oriental neoclassical” tendency.⁴⁶

The “Romano-western” group of objects Carandini dates to the period from the year 128, when Sabina assumed the title *Augusta*, to 134, the end of the Third Journey and the return to Rome. Most he places in the years 132–134.⁴⁷ Carandini's sample is not large: nine in all, of which two are known only from drawings, and one other that is quite possibly modern. Here the hairstyles generally seem to have some contact with those found on Sabina's coins minted at Rome, particularly Abdy's first, second, and fifth styles. These three hairstyles make their initial appearance on coins that Abdy dates to 128, 130/131, and ca. 135, respectively (see Appendix 1).

The varying portraiture of Sabina on the carved stones raises an important methodological point. As we shall see in Chapter 9, on the coins of Rome, Sabina's hairstyles do not progress in a strict linear series but some demonstrably recur simultaneously with others. Since each of the three relevant styles is also found concurrently on coins that Abdy assigns to the period 135–ca. 137, there is no compelling reason to suppose that Carandini's "Roman-western" gemstones present an independent, firmer chronology.

Yet Carandini's lower date for this group is certainly correct. An intaglio on a carnelian gemstone closely reproduces Sabina's portrait from an early *aureus* with the "Matidian" hairstyle; Abdy assigns this coin to the years 128–ca. 130.⁴⁸ Two items show confronted heads of Hadrian and Sabina; one, a cameo formerly in Bucharest and now lost, was apparently inscribed on its reverse SABINA AVGVSTA and HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS—and so again would date no earlier than 128. The one iconographic surprise in this group is the drawing of a gem that was once conserved in an Italian collection of the 17th century. It depicts Sabina with hair somewhat akin to a late type and a double diadem—joined with a garland of roses. Parallels for that style in this empress's portraiture are wholly lacking.

Carandini's "Greco-oriental neoclassical" group is larger than his "Romano-western" one, consisting of 16 objects (again, not all demonstrably ancient).⁴⁹ There is one instance in which Hadrian and Sabina are shown with confronted heads; the rest of the gemstones depict solo female busts. Carandini sees in each of these images the same basic hairstyle, what he calls Sabina's Matidian "turban." But there are numerous variants in other aspects of these miniature portraits on stone, especially the front portion of the hairstyle and (where it is present) diadem. On iconographic grounds, Carandini considers all these items to be products of the Third Journey, especially the years 128–131 "or a little later." He must be correct in positing the year 128 as the lower date for this "Greco-oriental" stylistic group. They all must postdate Sabina's elevation to *Augusta*. However, the tight chronology he proposes for the creation of these images—essentially the first half of the great imperial journey to the east—is not persuasive. Again, Sabina's hairstyles on the coins of Rome suggest that the portrait types of the "eastern" gemstones are conceivable at any time from 128 up to her death in 137.

So where does this leave us? It is a pity that we are missing the original statue of Sabina (styled *Sebaste/Augusta*) from the

monumental arch that Plancia Magna set up at Perge in 121, and that the one that survives reflects a later stage in the portraiture of the empress—indeed, probably following her deification. It would be of some interest to see how she was portrayed in that assemblage from early in Hadrian's reign. We have seen that Olisipo in Lusitania in 121 also honored the empress as *Augusta* with a statue before she officially received the title, and Lyttos in Crete set up paired statues of Hadrian and Sabina in 124/125—though again, the actual art works are lost. Those early dedications show local initiative at work in both west and east, and (to state the obvious) demonstrate that from the start of the regime it was perfectly proper to memorialize Sabina with public art. Many communities, however, felt no pressing need to do so.⁵⁰

We can presume that the impetus for widespread attention and portraiture, including in the private realm, did not come until the year 128, when the empress was named *Augusta* and the first coins commemorating that title began to be minted. Our examination of the corpus of extant sculpture and the clearly private medium of gems and intaglios has offered very little in the way of possible counter-examples.

The main insight that this material evidence offers us is that, even after almost a dozen years after Hadrian's accession, Sabina was presented to the world not so much as an individual in her own right but rather as an emblem of continuity with the Ulpian line, the living embodiment of her deified mother, Matidia, and her grandmother Marciana. In the next two chapters we shall find the empress suddenly and unexpectedly leap into startling focus for us as a living personality, only to dissolve quickly, this time into an idealized abstraction.

The Journey to Egypt

The naming of Sabina as *Augusta* early in the year 128 signaled a massively enhanced public role for the empress. The best indication of her elevation in status is the staggering number of public honors and civic commemorations that she was to receive in the remaining years of her life—more than any imperial woman had accrued since Augustus' wife Livia. Hadrian's assumption of the title *pater patriae*, which came shortly afterward, was clearly coordinated with the grant to his wife. Here the emperor followed the lead of Augustus, and declined the honor at the start of his rule, and then again, until almost a dozen years had passed. One can imagine the theatricality of the moment when he finally allowed himself to be called “father of the fatherland”—unfortunately inaccessible to us.¹

The lustrous appellation, which now became a regular part of Hadrian's official titulature, did, however, highlight an awkward fact. Hadrian and Sabina had no children of their own. Indeed, the new *Augusta* was now aged at least 42 or 43, and so would have been deemed near the end of childbearing age. The *Epitome de Caesaribus*—that late-antique biographical mishmash that has come down to us under the name Aurelius Victor—offers an explanation for Hadrian's lack of an heir, purporting to quote the empress herself. Sabina “used to boast openly (*palam iactabat*),” we are told, “because she had ascertained his nature was monstrous, that she had taken pains not to become pregnant by him, which would be to the hazard of the human race.” Needless to say, the nature of the source—and the fact that Suetonius ascribes a similar saying to the emperor Nero's father—should put us on our guard. For what it is worth, the summarizer of Dio Cassius narrates

that Hadrian toward the end of his life blamed “nature”—not machinations by his wife—on his inability to produce an heir.

But let us suspend disbelief for just a moment, and see if we can wring anything useful out of Sabina’s reported statement. “If this means that she resorted to contraception,” observes J. Morwood, “it tells that her union with him was not a *mariage blanc*.” The alternative, of course, is that Sabina avoided pregnancy by practicing abstinence. So speculation into the means of birth control does not get us very far beyond the obvious point of the anecdote, that Sabina was at serious odds with her husband, even when she was of an age to bear a child. It happens that the *Epitome de Caesaribus* a few sentences later ascribes a provocative claim to Hadrian, in reference to bribing foreign kings secretly to keep the peace, introduced in precisely the same way: “he used to openly boast (*iactabat palam*) that he had obtained more by leisure than others had by arms.” Clearly, we are in the realm of received stereotypes here, namely, the alleged pacifism of Hadrian and the disagreeability of Sabina.²

Western Preliminaries to the Third Journey

The assumption of these lofty titles by the imperial couple after so lengthy a (manufactured) delay surely formed part of the preparations for a new bout of ambitious travel (Figure 7), that in the event would consume the next five years. It will suffice for our purposes to sketch the Third Journey to the east and its preliminaries here in outline, and then to revisit the aspects that directly involve our understanding of Sabina. The only truly secure anchor we have in this inquiry, it must be stressed, is the empress’s activity in Egypt in November 130. Dedications to the empress elsewhere from this period need not imply her presence, or even the expectation of her visit. But these survivals sometimes are genuinely illuminating in regard to the contemporary reception of her public image.

The first question one asks is where the new *Augusta* spent late spring and summer 128. For it was then that Hadrian inspected affairs in the provinces of Sicily, Africa Proconsularis, and Mauretania.³ It is evident that the emperor took great pride in his military and administrative efforts on his tour. Late in his reign (ca. 134–138), Hadrian minted in Rome four separate series of coins in various denominations,

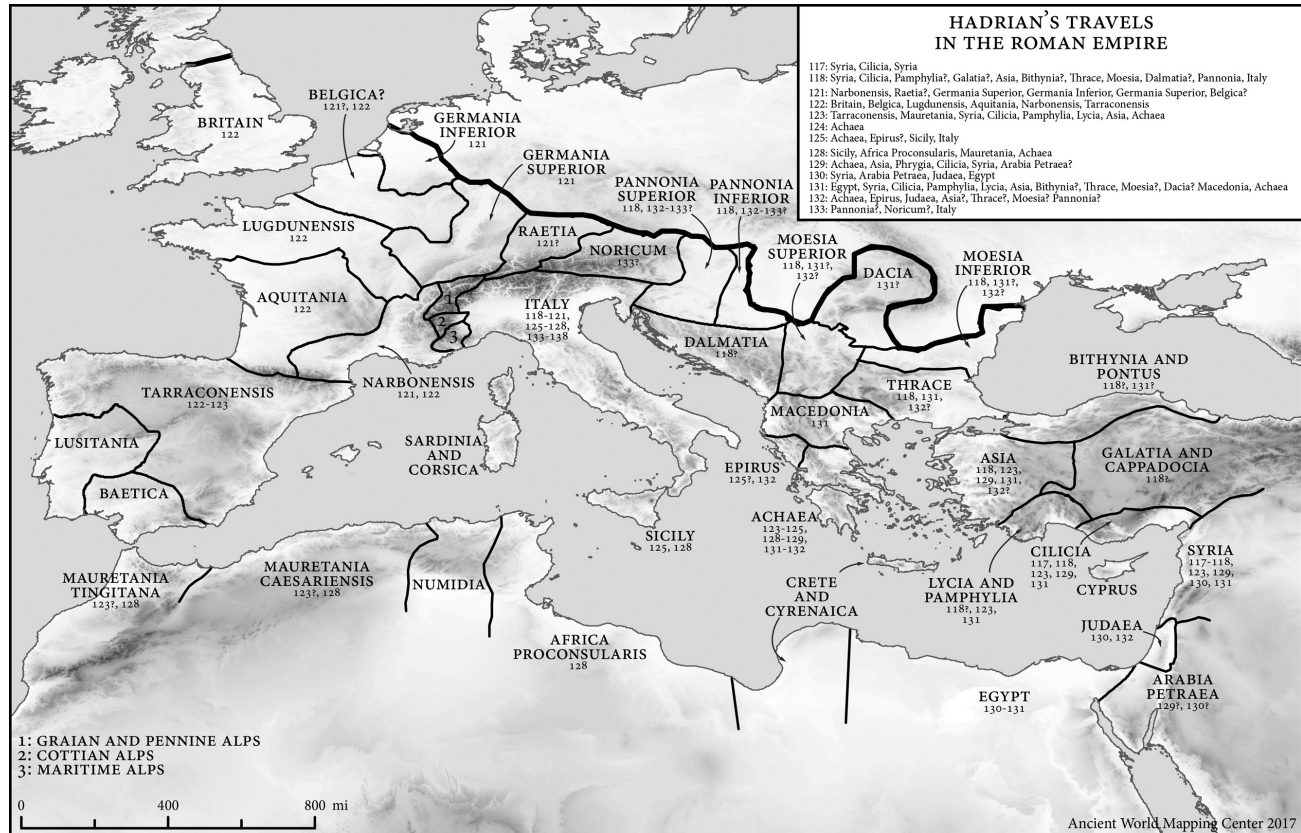


FIGURE 7. The Roman Empire, showing Hadrian's journeys (117–133 CE).

Credit: Ancient World Mapping Center

recalling his various travels throughout the Mediterranean and beyond. The reverses variously show personifications of the provinces: symbolic scenes of his arrival (*adventus*) in the provinces; Hadrian making an address (*adlocutio*) to diverse armies of the Empire; and the emperor as restorer (*restitutor*) of provinces. In addition to types representing Sicily, those for Africa (especially) and Mauretania enjoy special prominence across these series.⁴ Whether he brought Sabina or not on this tour is an open question. The fact that we have several dedications to ‘Sabina Augusta’ from Africa Proconsularis of course falls short of definite proof.⁵

Epigraphic information on Hadrian’s movements during this trip shows his careful inspection of military matters in Africa Proconsularis. The *Historia Augusta* simply says of this tour that “he allotted much in the way of benefits to the African provinces.” Elsewhere, it claims that he changed the name of Carthage to ‘Hadrianopolis,’ which is tendentious—indeed, absurd. But this notice suggests that the emperor at least visited the city in this year, which in any case we might expect. And the commemorative “travel” coins pretty much confirm that Hadrian inspected one if not both of the Mauretanian provinces (i.e., Caesariensis, and Tingitana farther to the west).⁶

*First Stages of the Third Journey to the East:
Athens, Asia Minor, Syria, and Arabia*

“Finally, after his return to Rome from Africa,” reports the *Historia Augusta*, Hadrian “immediately set out for the east, journeying by way of Athens” (Figures 8a and 8b). He must have been in that city by October 128, his second visit as emperor in four years. One object surely was to arrive in time for the Greater Eleusinian Mysteries, in which he seems to have been initiated at the second (i.e., highest) grade. Hadrian stayed at Athens into the early spring, with a side trip to Sparta (which he had visited also in early 125). Before departing from Athens, the emperor dedicated the massive sixth-century BCE temple that he was completing to Zeus, and accepted a new honorific—*Olympios*, which henceforth became a regular part of his titulature in the east.⁷

Spring 129 saw Hadrian on the move through Anatolia. After Ephesus and Miletus, the exact itinerary eastward through the interior becomes devilishly difficult to trace. On 27 June Hadrian

is attested at Laodicea on the Lycus. By 23 July he had progressed only as far as Apamea in Phrygia (modern Dinar in Turkey), 150 km northeast of Laodicea and 250 km due east of Ephesus.⁸ It is at a point some 70 km north-by-northeast of Laodicea—very much off the main ancient roads—that we find a striking dedication in Greek to Sabina, perhaps in this case connected with her personal presence on the tour.

The remote settlement of Dionysiopolis in southwest Phrygia had in its territory a small and primitive hilltop temple (near modern Bahadınlar), overlooking a bend in the Maeander river. W. M. Ramsay reconstructed the inscription on this temple's entablature, now mostly lost, from an earlier report: "the whole may be restored as running around the temple on all four sides in one line with a second line above the doorway." He conjectured, from other local inscriptions, that the temple was dedicated to the gods of that country, Apollo Lairbenus and Leto (i.e., Apollo assimilated with the Phrygian sun god Lairbenus, and his mother), in prayer for the salvation of the empress Sabina. For part of the entablature that was placed above the doorway yields two names in collocation: [V]ibia S[abina S]ebaste, and that of the dedicator, Lu[cius—]enes. Ramsay supplemented the latter name as L. [Vibius?Diog]enes, and regarded him as a freedman of the empress, with the role of managing her property among the huge imperial estates to be found south of that locale. "Strictly she was Sabina Empress, but Vibia is retained because she was Vibia to her *libertus*" (i.e., freedman), notes Ramsay. As for the date, Sabina clearly was still alive when this temple was set up.

What is missing from Ramsay's clever (and persuasive) reconstruction is an occasion for the erection of the principal temple in an established sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenus specifically in honor of Sabina. The transit of the imperial party through Phrygia in 129 would have provided strong motivation. Indeed, perhaps Sabina at this very time freed one of her slaves who was a native of the area—whether traveling with the empress, or already tied to an estate in these parts—and he in turn erected the temple as a thank offering.⁹

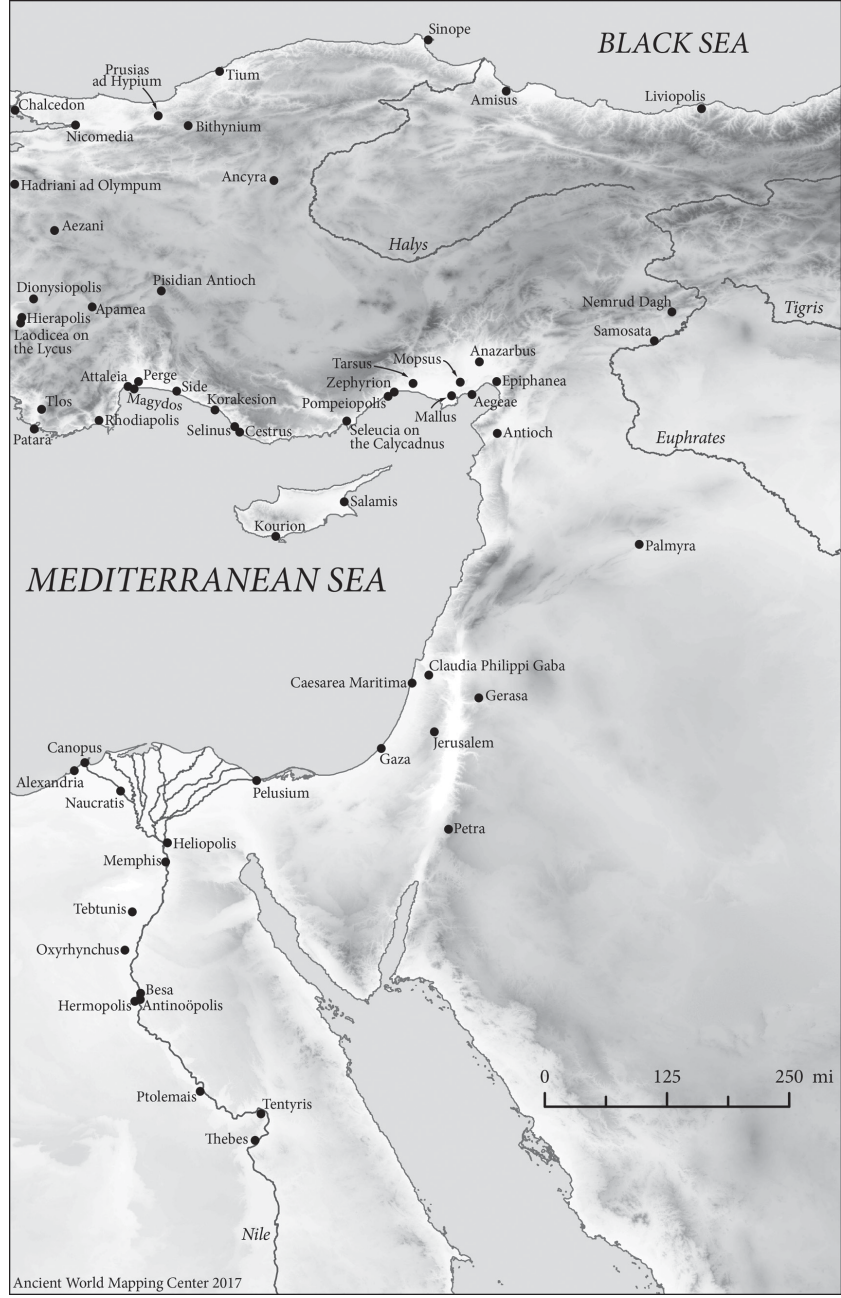
There is good reason to think that the imperial party had reached Antioch in Syria by October 129. Hadrian may have based himself there through the winter and some months beyond. From probably this headquarters, Hadrian took side trips to the cult site of Zeus on Mount Casius (today's Jebel Aqra, on the border of Turkey and Syria),



FIGURES 8A AND 8B. The Greek east in the time of Hadrian.

Credit: Ancient World Mapping Center

B



FIGURES 8A AND 8B. Continued

and to Palmyra in the interior, to which he awarded the title ‘Hadriane.’ A token marked ‘Palmyra’ has a depiction of either Marciana or her granddaughter Sabina. If the latter, it may be associated with Hadrian’s visit to the city in the year 130, though whether the *tessera* served as an “entry ticket” to a celebratory dinner (as has been suggested) must remain just a guess. At this time Hadrian probably also ventured farther south to the province of Arabia.¹⁰

The Foundation of Aelia Capitolina on the Site of Jerusalem in 130

In October 2014 a substantial fragment of a new, monumental inscription was unearthed in Jerusalem. Originally gracing a construction such as an arch, the left-hand part of the inscription was recovered in the late 19th century, but the right-hand section—which was reused as part of the opening of a deep cistern—had been lost to view until much later. The reunited text gives us a date, namely, Hadrian’s 14th tribunician year, the year 130. It supports what we know from several other contemporary inscriptions from the army to the emperor, as well as Hadrian’s (later) ADVENTVS IVDAEAE coin issues, that the emperor was in Judaea at that time.¹¹

A crucial question for our chronology is the cause and timing of the Second Jewish Revolt, which was to last over three years and require the emperor’s personal intervention to quell. The *Historia Augusta* implies that it was at the time of this visit that the Jews rose up against Rome in their great rebellion “because they were forbidden to mutilate their genitals,” i.e., practice circumcision. Many have suspected that the biographer, to provoke ridicule of the Jews, is doubly defying chronology. He places the revolt too early, and also makes the instigating factor one of Hadrian’s punitive measures that is more likely to have followed suppression of the rebellion. On the other extreme, one might mention here a (dubious and otherwise unsupported) Rabbinic tradition found in the *Midrash* that Hadrian on his accession actually permitted the Jews to rebuild their Temple, but Samaritans interfered. And it was the emperor’s failure to follow through that almost led to a Jewish revolt.¹²

The epitomator of Dio Cassius offers a somewhat fuller narrative, with a different cause for the war and a different chronology than that of the *Historia Augusta*. First, “at Jerusalem, Hadrian founded a

city in place of the one which had been razed to the ground, naming it Aelia Capitolina, and on the site of the temple of the [Jewish] god, he raised a new temple to Jupiter.” The new name of the foundation, derived from that of the emperor as refounder, shows that its status was to be that of a *colonia*—the second one in the province, after Vespasian’s re-establishment of Caesarea Maritima as one. By definition, citizens of a Roman colony were Roman citizens, and they used Roman laws, Roman-style magistracies, and Latin as the official language. Then there was the provocative choice of the location of the temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, which wholly would have supplanted the Jewish cult. “This brought on a war of no slight importance nor of brief duration,” says Dio, “for the Jews deemed it intolerable that foreign races should be settled in their city and foreign religious rites planted there.” But Dio does not date the rebellion to the time of the emperor’s visit in the year 130. “So long, indeed, as Hadrian was close by in Egypt and again in Syria, they remained quiet. . . . But when Hadrian went farther away, they openly revolted.”

In contrast to Dio, the early-fourth-century church historian Eusebius (of Caesarea, and thus in a position to be well-informed) characterizes the foundation of Colonia Aelia Capitolina as an outcome of the quashing of the Jewish revolt. Elsewhere, Eusebius purports to offer an exact chronology as well as a list of Roman measures aimed at erasing Jewish identity. “In Hadrian’s 19th year (= 135 CE) the Jewish War that was conducted in Palestine reached its conclusion. . . . [F]rom that time, permission was denied them even to enter Jerusalem. . . . [I]n Hadrian’s 20th year (= 136 CE) Aelia was founded by Aelius Hadrianus; and before its [southern] gate . . . he set up an idol of a pig in marble, signifying the subjugation of the Jews to Roman authority.”³

Among the later accounts, one produced in the later fourth century by Epiphanius, the bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, certainly grabs attention. The context is to explain the background to one Aquila, a translator of the Bible who “became known” in Hadrian’s 12th regnal year (= 128/129). As preface to this story, Epiphanius describes at some length how Hadrian summoned all the physicians in the empire to demand a treatment for his ailing body. When the doctors were unable to make progress, he abused them and their profession, and even wrote a letter upbraiding them for their ignorance. To address his illness, instead he set out for Egypt, feeling it necessary to investigate also the cities on his route, “because he was a curious person,” we are

told. In the course of this journey from Rome, the emperor passed through Antioch, Coele Syria, and Phoenicia, and arrived in Judaea “47 years after the devastation of Jerusalem . . . which Titus son of Vespasian destroyed in the second year of his reign.” (That would have made the year 81—an obvious error—but the mistake does show that Epiphanius certainly was trying to describe the Third Journey, which started in 128/129.) Once in Judaea, Hadrian visited Jerusalem, made note of its generally ruined state, and formed the intention (we are told) to rebuild the city but not the Jewish Temple. He then refounded Jerusalem under his own name as ‘Aelia,’ and handed over the construction project while in progress to “his relative by marriage” Aquila, a native of Sinope in Pontus (on the northern coast of modern Turkey), whom he had brought with him—“a translator and a Greek, as Hadrian himself was a Greek.” There is no reference to a Jewish revolt, or the nature of the new foundation. But the (surprisingly well-informed) chronology offered here certainly implies a date for the ordination of Aelia Capitolina soon after 128/129.¹⁴

Indeed, the evidence of coins minted by the new colony (all with Latin legends) suggests that its foundation was at least formally declared in 130, at the time of Hadrian’s visit. Hadrian’s obverse portrait on the earliest types closely resembles those found on Roman issues from the first half of his reign. Another of the early issues of the new mint shows a draped bust of Sabina on the reverse, in which she sports the “Matidian” hairstyle, which at least does not exclude an earlier date.

In essence, Hadrian’s heavy-handed reorganization of the holy city Jerusalem as a Roman *colonia* peopled by Hellenes revived, at least in spirit, the Seleucid Antiochus Epiphanes’ failed anti-Jewish project of the earlier second century BCE. Yet everything suggests that a revolt against Roman measures was some time in building, and that the charismatic Jewish leader, Bar Kochba, rose up in earnest only in 132. The rebel’s followers marked his rule by its own era, which commenced in late spring or early summer 132; their dated coins run through “Year 3” (134/135). The fall of the Jewish stronghold at Bethar (a rocky hill 11 km southwest of Jerusalem) in autumn 135 meant the effective end of the war, though survivors continued to hold out for some months in refuge caves. Definitive organization of Aelia Capitolina probably came only after battle in the field had ceased.¹⁵

Arrival in Egypt

The most extensive subset of Hadrian's retrospective "travel" coin issues is the one that commemorates his visit to Egypt. It is also the only one that includes an image of the empress Sabina. In depicting the imperial arrival (*adventus*) at Alexandria, a reverse type (in gold and bronze) shows the gods Serapis and Isis, standing right, formally welcoming Hadrian and his wife, who stand at left. We also find representations in gold, silver, and bronze of 'Aegyptos,' and also of the city of Alexandria and (especially) the river Nile as if they were provinces in their own right. These series stunningly celebrated what was obviously meant from the start to be a high point of the Third Journey. The bishop Epiphanius may reflect a deep-seated popular perception in his understanding of Egypt as the whole motivating force for Hadrian's journey to the east, the culmination of his curiosity seeking and his quest for renewed health.

The emperor and his party entered the province overland from Gaza. Their first stop, in July or early August 130, was Pelusium, where Hadrian gave orders to restore the tomb of Pompey the Great. Next was Alexandria, with the emperor's entrance celebrated in city coins dated to 129/130 (and so before the new civic year that started 29 August 130). Then the entourage had a wait of some weeks for the Nile floods of early September to recede before starting a comprehensive trip up the Nile.

Papyrus documents show that preparations in Egypt for Hadrian's arrival had commenced well before then. Already in December 129, the city of Oxyrhynchus (160 km south of modern Cairo) was stockpiling vast supplies of food, with further additions made in late May 130. Other communities along the Nile no doubt had been instructed to do the same. It has been estimated on the basis of the figures we get for Oxyrhynchus (e.g., orders for 372 suckling pigs and 2000 sheep) that Hadrian's entourage on his tour of Egypt may have numbered as many as 5000 individuals. Since the time of the annexation of Egypt after Actium, Roman senators had been barred from setting foot in the country without the emperor's permission. And so many of the top elites in the entourage of Hadrian and Sabina were seeing the province—which was administered practically as an imperial estate—for the first time.¹⁶

The composition of the large party that accompanied Hadrian and Sabina went well beyond strict functionaries. A. R. Birley makes a good argument for the presence in the group of an impressive list

of men and women of letters, including the poet and Commagenian princess Julia Balbilla (probably joining the emperor at Athens); the rhetor C. Avidius Heliodorus (now the emperor's correspondence secretary, later himself prefect of Egypt) with his wife, a Jewish princess; Hadrian's freedman Mesomedes (known to have penned an *elogium* of Antinoös); an imperial chronicler, Phlegon of Tralles; and another poet, Paion of Side. In a special category is the sister of D. Terentius Gentianus (*cos. suff.* 116), who left six hexameter verses in Latin on the Great Pyramid at Giza that were mourning the (apparently recent) loss of her brother. According to the *Historia Augusta*, Hadrian considered this Gentianus a potential rival to the throne, and hated him because he was a favorite of the Senate. As it turns out, we can identify this woman's husband with a fair degree of certainty: a *cos. suff.* 114 who governed Asia under Hadrian in 128/129. Birley plausibly suggests both Terentia and her husband joined the imperial tour when it stopped at Ephesus in 129.¹⁷

At the highest level of prominence in the touring party was Hadrian's own sister, Domitia Paulina. She soon was to die on the tour, probably in Egypt itself. The epitomator of Dio Cassius, in the context of narrating Hadrian's lavish modes of memorializing the dead Antinoös, asserts that these extravagant actions exposed him to ridicule, as did the fact that he had not paid his sister any immediate honor on her death. Slight material support for her presence in Egypt is provided by a set of badly damaged statue bases found in Tentyris (near modern Dendera, just north of Thebes), one of which honors "Paulina, sister of?Hadr[ian] Caesar." Surviving Domitia Paulina was her aged husband, L. Iulius Ursus Servianus (*cos. suff.* 90, *cos. ord.* II 102), then already at least in his mid-80s. He was spry enough to hold a third consulship in 134, and so perhaps also present on the journey with his wife.¹⁸

Especially close to Hadrian's side in Egypt was Antinoös. Contemporary art and poetry make much of his intimate companionship with Hadrian—not specifically as his lover, but rather as a partner in the emperor's beloved and dangerous pursuit of hunting. This companionship, of course, is perfectly consistent with a sexual understanding of their relationship; hunting had strong erotic associations in both the Greek and Roman imagination. Hadrian himself wrote an epigram (epigraphically preserved at Thespieae in Boeotia) in which he represents himself offering a trophy—a bear that he slew from horseback—to Eros, himself a hunter.¹⁹

Notably, the Egyptian poet and magician Pancrates wrote up an imaginative description of Hadrian and Antinoös on a hunt, a work that may well date to the youth's lifetime. Though a piece of luck, fragments of Pancrates' verse are preserved for us both in direct transmission through a papyrus find and via the early-third-century compiler Athenaeus of Alexandria. In Pancrates' hexameter poem, Hadrian and Antinoös are engaged in civilizing work, eradicating a monstrous Mauretanian lion, which had been ravaging "all Libya," from the vicinity of Alexandria. (The beast evidently had cut a swath through a distance of over 3000 km!)

Pancrates in his composition has Hadrian tacitly test the spear-throwing skills of "exceedingly lovely Antinoös," here not just sexualized but also identified with the significant patronymic "son of the slayer of Argus," the god Hermes. (That parentage is asserted elsewhere.) Athenaeus further says that Pancrates—one assumes in the same poem—provided an aetiology for the appearance of a special variety of lotus, which first sprang from ground soaked in the blood of the Mauretanian lion. Pancrates, continues Athenaeus, made a great show of presenting the red-hued flower of this lotus to the emperor when he was staying at Alexandria, and suggested that he name it "the flower of Antinoös." The flower—and no doubt a reading of the poem that explained it—scored an instant success. "Hadrian . . . granted to the poet that he should be maintained for the future in the Museum at the public expense."

It also appears that Pancrates was invited to join the imperial touring party on their trip up the Nile, where a macabre story attests to the evident sway this magician and poet developed over Hadrian—the emperor handsomely rewarded him for using a spell that progressively killed a man in seven hours, and "sent the emperor himself dreams as he thoroughly tested the whole truth of the magic within his power."²⁰

Alexandria had represented Sabina on its coinage even before her arrival. As we have noted (in the Introduction), the city began minting types showing Sabina already in 128/129, and then, after a year's hiatus, in a continuous series from 130/131 through 136/137.²¹ For all those years we have tetradrachms of billon (i.e., an alloy less than 25% silver, and so equivalent to one Roman *denarius*) where a bust of Hadrian is pictured on obverse and Sabina on reverse (Figure 9). In these "paired" billon coins Sabina appears as a bust except for the year 130/131, i.e., the precise year of the imperial visit to Egypt, where the empress is shown



FIGURE 9. Alexandria mint: tetradrachm (billon) of Hadrian and Sabina (dated on reverse regnal year 13 of Hadrian = 128/129 CE) = *RPC III* 5729.

Credit: Classical Numismatic Group, from sale Auction 100 no. 1781 7 October 2015



FIGURE 10. Alexandria mint: tetradrachm (billon) of Sabina (dated on reverse regnal year 15 of Hadrian = 130/131 CE) = *RPC III* 5773.

Credit: Classical Numismatic Group, from sale Electronic Auction 355 no. 383 15 July 2015

also in a seated portrait holding grain ears and a scepter (Figure 10). Indeed, that year saw also the introduction of tetradrachms where a portrait of Sabina features on both the obverse and reverse, as a bust and seated or standing figure, respectively. When seated, the empress shows the attributes of Ceres/Demeter (perhaps combined with also those of Isis), and when standing those of Eusebeia (= Pietas). It is hard to resist the interpretation that the issues of that year had a commemorative aspect, especially since the “double Sabina” tetradrachms do not

further continue. From the Demeter imagery, U. Hahn even has suggested that Alexandria either received (or was expecting) a grain disbursement from Sabina in 130/131.

The mint masters of Alexandria did subsequently strike issues that retained a bust of Sabina on the obverse, but only in a lower denomination coin in bronze (half-drachms), in an elaborate series that stretches from 131/132 through 135/136. There are about 14 distinct types in all, with 11 different reverses. They variously depict Olympian goddesses (Demeter and Demeter-Selene); personified deities (Nike, or Victory, and Dikaiosyne, or Justice); hybrid Roman-Egyptian gods (Hermanubis, Sarapis, and especially Isis); or the famed lighthouse of Alexandria. However, none of these reverses represents an original composition for Sabina. Indeed, all can be found already in use on the Alexandrian coinage of Trajan.²²

Hadrian's "Year 21" (= 136/137) marked a turning point in the Alexandrian empress coinage. Production of the Hadrian/Sabina tetradrachms practically came to a standstill. A billon coin with paired imperial portraits bearing that date exists, but it is known from just two specimens. And Sabina was suddenly absent from the obverses of the bronze half-drachms, after that impressive series spanning six years. Issues depicting Hadrian on obverse continued unabated (with about 40 different reverse types), as did a series honoring Antinoös (on obverse and reverse) that started in 134/135. It seems a certainty that the empress was still alive through that entire year: the city of Amisus in Pontus produced an obverse type for Sabina for 136/137, and indeed for 137/138 as well.

At Alexandria for the first of those years, what one finds instead of the expected empress and her title on Hadrian's coin reverses is much recycling of old types of goddesses actual and personified, namely, a standing Athena and also Demeter, Artemis the huntress, and Isis in various guises, then Tyche (Fortune), Eirene (Peace), Elpis (Hope), and Euthenia (Plenty). Dominating the Hadrianic reverses of 137/138 is a new figure, that of Pronoia (Providence), depicted holding a phoenix (a first for the Alexandrian coinage) and scepter. Unusually for Alexandria, a reverse legend tells us precisely who she is—no doubt because her introduction is an innovation for ancient coinage in general. It is striking that a city that was so prompt in honoring Sabina on her declaration as *Augusta*, and so demonstrative in celebrating her sojourn in Egypt—indeed, well after its conclusion—should in her last years have

substituted abstractions. There was also nothing minted at Alexandria for Antinoös in this year, or beyond.²³

The Death of Antinoös

This initial visit to Alexandria in August and September 130 would have occupied the imperial party until the Nile's highest flood receded, and the river once again was contained within its banks—a cycle that usually took until the end of September. The main matter at hand for Hadrian and Sabina was then a shipboard voyage up the river to Upper Egypt, for which (as we have seen) local planning had started some nine months previous. But high drama soon was to intervene. "While sailing on the Nile he lost his Antinoös, and for this youth he wept like a woman." And so the *Historia Augusta* sums up the most notorious event not just of Hadrian's Third Journey, but also of his entire reign. It is notable that the biographer here perversely omits a crucial and well-known fact, that the emperor also founded a new city in his honor, Antinoöpolis, to mark the spot where the youth had drowned.²⁴

The first part of the route upstream that was capped by Antinoös' death is not hard to reconstruct. A. R. Birley takes the starting point as probably the coastal pleasure resort of Canopus (which Hadrian is said later to have evoked in the architecture of his Tivoli villa), then Heliopolis, Memphis (near which the sister of Gentianus inscribed her pyramid poem), Oxyrhynchus, and Hermopolis. This last city was located on the west bank of the Nile, and boasted a great Hellenistic temple to its patron deity, Thoth—the Egyptian Hermes—messenger of the gods, who by this time had developed into the god of wisdom and of all magical lore. It was in a stretch of the Nile near Hermopolis, opposite the village of Besa (coincidentally sharing a name with Hadrian's Athenian deme), that Antinoös met his demise.

The chronology, however, is hazy. We are offered just one fixed point, and it is a shaky one. A late chronicler gives the date of the founding of the city of Antinoöpolis as 30 October—under the year 122. Though the year is wildly wrong, the month and day should be at least approximately correct, as a calendar of cult offerings from Oxyrhynchus (late second/early third centuries) suggests.

Many modern authorities, working from the late chronicler's date, confidently suppose the tragedy played out against the backdrop of

Egyptian ritual celebrations, especially those honoring the murder of the god Osiris. The problems, however, are numerous. For one thing, the Greek writer Plutarch, an older contemporary of Hadrian, tells us that the major festival in Egypt at this point of the year was “the birthday of the Staff of the Sun,” held on the 23rd of the Alexandrian month Phaophi (equivalent to Julian 20 October), and gives a different date for the death of Osiris, namely, 17 Athyr (13 November), which he says initiated a four-day festival. But the basic suggestion is an attractive one, for a coincidence with a red-letter date in the Osirian festival calendar would explain how Antinoös’ death gained so much valency. One notes that in Rome, rites in honor of Isis and her brother (and husband) Osiris were celebrated each year from 28 October to 3 November, with the first of those days reckoned as the death of Osiris. For the Romans in Hadrian’s company, any accident that happened in Egypt during that time would have been particularly evocative.²⁵

We have noted (Chapter 5) that the epitome of Dio Cassius, the *Historia Augusta*, and Aurelius Victor in the *Liber de Caesaribus* present basically the same account of the death of Antinoös, one that explicitly sought to undermine the explanation that Hadrian himself seems to have offered in his (lost) *Autobiography*. The official version comes to us in highly succinct form, and may not have been that more expansive when first promulgated. “He fell into the Nile, as Hadrian writes,” says Dio’s summarizer. But as the *Historia Augusta* notes, there were various alternate reports.

All three of our main sources offer the possibility that Antinoös sacrificed himself. The Dio Cassius epitome represents it as “the truth.” Why? Noting the emperor’s obsession with the occult, it states Antinoös was “sacrificed . . . it being necessary that a life should be surrendered freely for the accomplishment of the ends Hadrian had in view,” without explaining those ends. The *Historia Augusta* briefly cites (unnamed) authorities who cast the death as a *devotio*, or ritual self-sacrifice, but also others who alleged that the youth’s beauty and Hadrian’s sexual *mores* show the emperor had more agency in the matter. (The reader is left to fill in the blanks.) Aurelius Victor sketches a dramatic scene and provides a purpose, but stops short of endorsing what he gives us. Hadrian, he explains, was eager to prolong his life; for that, foreign priests (*magi*) had demanded human sacrifice. When all in Hadrian’s circle demurred, Antinoös stepped forward in service to the emperor.

One thing that resonates is the flat statement in the Dio epitome, that “the truth” is that Antinoös was sacrificed—an outright rejection of Hadrian’s version of events. Also significant is the Aurelius Victor account, which explains at some length that Antinoös committed suicide explicitly to secure the longevity of the emperor. The same tradition seems to crop up in a very late compilation, the Byzantine encyclopedia known as the *Suda*. “They say that Antinoös was the plaything of Hadrian,” we are told, “and when he predeceased him, [Hadrian] ordered that he be honored with statues everywhere, and finally he observed a certain star in heaven, which he said was Antinoös.” Of interest is the use of the verb “predecease” (Greek *proteleutan*). The word (and its associates) is unique in the *Suda*, but is found as a quasi-technical term in astrological texts in predictions of premature death. Whatever its veracity, the macabre story of Antinoös’ sacrifice to ensure the emperor’s longevity responded closely to aspects of Hadrian’s developed public persona that he himself engaged in and promoted—curiosity in the occult and an open desire for immortality.²⁶

Origins and Nature of Antinoös’ Cult

Then there is the important question of what happened to Antinoös’ body, which is the subject of no end of modern speculation. The ancient literary sources we do have support a range of interpretations, from total disappearance in the river to a funeral ceremony involving a costly boat. As for burial, Hegesippus (writing just a few decades after Hadrian’s reign) alludes to a cenotaph, Clement of Alexandria to an actual tomb at his eponymous city.²⁷

The early stages in the deceased Antinoös’ story are highly consequential, but not at all clear to us, except in one regard: Sabina, who clearly was present throughout, plays no role. Following the statement that Hadrian mourned the youth “in a womanly fashion,” the *Historia Augusta* says nothing about the mode of burial. But the biographer adds “the Greeks, in fact, consecrated him following Hadrian’s wishes, maintaining that oracles were being issued by him, which Hadrian himself allegedly composed.” There is no doubt as regards Hadrian’s intense sorrow. The contemporary rhetor Alexander Numenius is said to have written to him a *Consolation for Antinoös*; Clement of Alexandria alleges that Hadrian commanded others also to mourn for

the youth, as if he were a son. As regards the “deification,” the evidence is strong—already with the second-century CE writer Hegesippus—for Hadrian’s institution in Egypt of an oracular cult for Antinoös, with actual “prophets” (i.e., interpreters).²⁸

The exact nature of the honors for Antinoös in Egypt and further afield demands discussion, for they offer vital comparanda to those for Sabina. But first, what are those “oracles” that the *Historia Augusta* says caused “Greeks” to adopt his worship? G. Renberg has made an excellent circumstantial case that Hadrian experienced dreams in which Antinoös appeared and spoke, words that the emperor represented as oracular revelations, and that led to the establishment of the cult. The emperor perhaps even engaged in divinatory rituals to prompt such a dream visit; the epitomator of Dio Cassius suggestively notes in explaining the background to Antinoös’ death that Hadrian “made use of oracles and all sorts of incantations.”²⁹

Hadrian evidently put much stock in dreams, and is likely to have recounted some in his *Autobiography*. Unfortunately, no ancient source specifically mentions one in which Hadrian saw Antinoös and heard him speak—which in itself is not a major impediment to Renberg’s reconstruction. Whatever the precise nature of the original “revelation,” a sign from the heavens later strengthened the case for the cultic honors paid to the youth. For a new star was observed, we are told by the summarizer of Dio Cassius, which Hadrian took, on the word of advisors, as a heavenly manifestation of the spirit of Antinoös. The Christian writer Tatian (died ca. 185) in his *Address to the Greeks* scornfully alleges that “the dead Antinoös was established as a beautiful youth in the moon,” because of perjured advice from individuals seeking reward.³⁰

It appears that Hadrian had plenty of help in imagining the figure of Antinoös after death. As the *Historia Augusta* puts it, “the Greeks, in fact, consecrated him following Hadrian’s wishes.” The emperor, however, must have provided the central direction for establishing his cult. His eagerness to set up statues to Antinoös quickly became notorious in antiquity. Our (polemical) Christian sources speak of Hadrian’s actual orders to worship Antinoös, even the fear he engendered in his subjects on this account. And Tertullian states that his demands produced no opposition.³¹

Sabina’s personal attitude in all this worship is irrecoverable, but it is safe to assume that she publicly complied. An obelisk in red granite honoring Antinoös, since 1822 set up on Rome’s Pincio hill (Figure 11),



FIGURE 11. Rome, Pincio hill: obelisk honoring the deceased Antinoös, from the reign of Hadrian.

Credit: T. C. Brennan

sheds at least some light on the regime's official presentation of the youth following upon his death. A hieroglyphic inscription covers the four sides of the obelisk (not quite 10 m tall), in which the youth is portrayed as a new god, 'Osiris-Antinoös,' in a text that very much blends the Egyptian and the Roman. Indeed, Hadrian is plausibly believed to have directed its composition, though there would have to have been a native Egyptian author or at least translator.

On the present east face of the stone, the divinized Antinoös is made to offer a prayer of divine blessing for both Hadrian and Sabina—the empress's only mention in an extant hieroglyphic text—seeking divine blessing from his father Horus. "The bulls and their cows breed lustily and produce their offspring for him [Hadrian], to gladden his heart and that of his great and beloved royal consort, the Lady of Both Lands [Queen of Egypt] and the cities, Sabina, who lives, is safe and in health, '*Sebaste*' [Augusta] who lives forever." The inscription clearly belongs to Sabina's lifetime.³²

The physical origins of this monument are hotly debated. It was found in 1589 outside Rome's Porta Maggiore, in the area of the emperor Elagabalus' Circus Varianus, from which it made a rather circuitous

way to its present location. The obelisk text itself is frustratingly ambiguous on the matter. The most straightforward interpretation is that it originally stood in Antinoöpolis, and came to Rome only in the early third century. But many scholars have argued that its original location was in fact Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli, and that Elagabalus moved it from there to his Circus. Still a third alternative is that there were two obelisks, one at Tivoli and the other at Antinoöpolis, and that our monument copies an Egyptian archetype, now lost.

The obelisk's hieroglyphic text does provide some support for G. Renberg's reconstruction of the Antinoös cult as occasioned by a dream and (in Egypt, at least) as centered on dream oracles. For it is said on the stone that Antinoös issues from his "holy place . . . [and] hears the appeals of those who invoke him and heals the sick among the needy poor by sending a dream."³³

What inflames our Christian authors most about Antinoös are the extreme honors the youth received after his death, in particular what they regarded as his fabricated divinity. Some state plainly that Hadrian divinized Antinoös, and express their disgust. Yet even amid the polemic, one notes that these sources sometimes imply that one cultic situation obtained in Egypt and another in the rest of the Roman world. In the 190s Clement of Alexandria offers a nuanced assessment: "another new deity was added to the number with great religious pomp in Egypt, and was near being so in Greece." In his *Against Celsus* (written 248), Origen of Alexandria says that the youth "is considered to be a god in Antinoöpolis in Egypt."³⁴

Promotion of Antinoös' Cult under Hadrian

Fortunately, there is a lot of material evidence to serve as a control on what our literary commentators say about Hadrian's honors for the deceased Antinoös.³⁵ Consider our information for Mantinea in the Peloponnesus, held to be the mother city of Antinoös' home town of Bithynium-Claudiopolis. It is clear that the city promptly established a sanctuary for Antinoös, and with it (we can assume) also a priesthood. We have an excellent candidate for the first incumbent of that post, a certain Veturius, who sponsored the minting at Mantinea (perhaps already in 131/132) of an extraordinarily ambitious series of commemorative coins portraying Antinoös and dedicated "to the Arcadians." His

series featured ten different items in five denominations; on obverse, each value of coin has either a left- or right-facing head of the youth. They seem more suitable for collectors than consumers, especially since Mantinea had no previous minting history in the Roman era. Significantly on these coins, Antinoös is not identified by name: evidently, he quickly had become famous enough to be recognized by his image alone. Surviving examples of the larger denominations of these Mantinean coins sometimes show the reverse in a markedly more worn state than the obverse, with manipulation of the edges. The natural supposition is that in antiquity they were mounted and worn as amulets. Reuse as talismans is paralleled for Antinoös issues from other cities, and powerfully attests to the magnetism of his cult.³⁶ At this juncture it is hard not to spare a thought for Sabina, who received no such treatment.

Mantineia provides strong evidence for official encouragement of the notion that the youth exercised an effective presence even in death. One indication is the interest that Hadrian's close friend C. Iulius Eurycles Herculanus, a native of Sparta, had in promoting the local cult. At Mantinea, Herculanus' heirs executed his wish to erect a costly portico, with a dedication inscribed jointly to the city and "Antinoös, god of the locality" (*epichorios theos*). The sanctuary of Antinoös must have been already up and running. Writing in the 170s, Pausanias noted the complex of honors, which he says Hadrian established, for Antinoös at Mantinea. These honors included a purpose-built temple, where "they consider Antinoös to be a god," plus an annual festival and quadrennial games. In the city's gymnasium, Pausanias noted a space, richly decorated with precious stones, which was dominated by images of Antinoös, including painted portraits assimilating the youth "especially to Dionysus."³⁷

So it comes as no surprise that Antinoös' birthplace of Bithynium itself quickly established a cult for the young man. A series of commemorative medallions—not coins—that Bithynium minted in Antinoös' honor allows him the title "god" (*theos*) on obverse, though "hero" also occurs. The reverses present seven different scenes illustrating the Arcadian myth of Hermes, all in an apparent effort to mythologize the youth as a son of a Hermes and a local Bithynian nymph (perhaps named Mantinoe). The medals further represent Antinoös' divinity by the device of a star, proudly proclaim Bithynium as his homeland (*patris*), and sport its citizens' new name, 'Bithynii Hadriani.' These

associations were concretized by the city's erection of a temple, the naming of a civic tribe, and the celebration of games all in Antinoös' honor.³⁸

But the cult of Antinoös permeated well beyond the expected centers of his popularity, with contemporary public and (especially) private responses attested for an impressive range of the empire. By way of example, at the temple of Liber Pater in Lepcis Magna (Africa Proconsularis), the citizens of the city honored Antinoös in syncretism with Deus Frugifer, a Libyan-Phoenician god of fertility equivalent to Silvanus, the Roman tutelary deity of woods and fields. It is frustrating that we do not have a date for the relevant inscription, which shows the tendency for provincial cities to integrate Antinoös into their own local theologies. However, at Lanuvium in Latium—located just 32 km southeast of Rome—we know that already before 133 locals reconstituted its temple of Diana to accommodate Antinoös on an equal footing with the goddess. Much farther afield, at Singidunum in Upper Moesia (modern Belgrade in Serbia), we find the inhabitants of the place dedicating what must be a small temple to “Antinoös the he[ro],” following the direction of Hadrian and L. Aelius Caesar. So this inscription must date between late 136 and the latter's death on 1 January 138, a time frame that in turn suggests that Hadrian continued his efforts to promote the cult right through the last years of his principate, and perhaps even after the death and deification of his own wife.³⁹

It is the Greek east, however, that produced the most highly organized response to the death of Antinoös. Most of the great centers of Hellenic culture are found to have embraced and furthered the new cult. Large-format Antinoös medallions soon cropped up in a number of cities in both Asia Minor and Old Greece; similarities in size, manufacturing technique, and obverse portraiture of Antinoös suggest a closely coordinated effort across a large geographical area. Inscriptions demonstrate that both Athens and Eleusis instituted a new ephebic festival, the Antinoeia. And at Athens 'Antinoös Ephebos' received his own priest. Numismatic evidence reveals additional priests for Antinoös at Corinth and Delphi.⁴⁰

Indeed, the coins and (especially) medals that bear Antinoös' image best illustrate the reach and patterns of his veneration. One observes that only three cities follow the lead of Bithynium and declare Antinoös 'theos' (“god”) on their issues. They include two important regional capitals, namely, Nicopolis in Epirus and Ancyra (modern Ankara) in

Galatia, as well as Argos in Achaea. Two cities omit “god” but expressly assimilate him to a deity. Cius in Bithynia syncretizes Antinoös and Pan. Meanwhile, Adramyteum in Mysia titles him ‘Iacchus,’ the god of initiates at the Eleusinian Mysteries, and hammers home the comparison with a depiction of Demeter of Eleusis on the coin’s reverse. And two communities do not offer a title at all on their coins and medals: Mantinea (the absolute center of the Antinoös cult in mainland Greece, where his status as “god” is not in doubt), and the Koinon of Bithynia.⁴¹

The vast majority of the other cities that mint in memory of Antinoös chose for him exclusively the title “hero” (Figure 12). That is the situation in Corinth and Delphi—notwithstanding their priests dedicated to the youth—and in cities in Aeolia, Ionia, Bithynia, Paphlagonia, Pontus, Mysia, Lydia, Phrygia, and Cilicia, and even at Alexandria in Egypt. In Cilicia, Tarsus presented three titles for Antinoös, terming him ‘Hero’ on its obverse types, and alternately “New Iacchus” or “New Pythian” (i.e., Apollo) on some of its reverses.⁴²

The coins and medals well show how much flexibility the provincial cities had in interpreting the figure of Antinoös. We find the titles of “god” and “hero” attested concurrently in the same province (Bithynia), and even in the same town (his native Bithynium).⁴³ Plus the cities evidently felt free to integrate Antinoös into their local cults, syncretizing the youth with established deities. The capability of the Antinoös cult



FIGURE 12. Alexandria mint: diobol (bronze) of Antinoös (dated on reverse regnal year 19 of Hadrian = 134/135 CE) = *RPC* III 6082. Obverse legend: “Of Antino[ös H]ero.”

Credit: Classical Numismatic Group, from sale Triton XIX lot 377 5 January 2016

to be molded in response to local conditions must have been one reason for its rapid success. Several of these city issues specify the name of a local grandee as dedicator, without further title. We have noted this response for Mantinea (Veturius), and we find it also at Smyrna—an extensive series minted by the famed rhetor and sophist M. Antonius Polemon—as well as at Adramyteum and Ancyra. These individuals possibly are to be identified as regional priests of the cult, but almost certainly to be considered as the persons who paid for the minting of special Antinoös emissions. What this form of sponsorship suggests is that local elites leveraged their influence to win popular acceptance of this new and strange imperial project.⁴⁴

Of the many numismatic commemorations of Antinoös, only a medal and coin of Amisus in Pontus and coins of Alexandria bear a date. The issues of these cities confirm what we might in any case expect, that promotion of the Antinoös cult in this medium started soon (though not immediately) after Hadrian's visit to Egypt. Amisus minted a coin showing Antinoös as Hermes on obverse, and a seated Demeter on reverse, with an inscription bearing the date 133/134. It also struck a medal with an obverse Antinoös portrait derivative of one from the Smyrna series of large commemorative medallions, and a reverse (showing the Pontic river god, Thermodon) that offers the same date. So Smyrna must have started minting its Antinoös series still earlier. Indeed, it seems highly likely that, in general, the (non-monetary) medallions that show Antinoös came first, and the youth's appearance on actual city currency is a slightly later phenomenon. It happens that Amisus initiated both at the same time, and did not continue either form of numismatic tribute past that year. The Antinoös coins of Alexandria in fact started a year later than those of Amisus, in 134/135, and the sequence continued through 136/137.⁴⁵

Expressions of enthusiasm for the cult are not hard to find. For instance, Alexandria and the new foundation of Antinoöpolis generated a large number of non-currency tokens, or *tesserae*, of Antinoös, mostly in lead but sometimes in glass, which in a few cases were clearly modified to be worn as amulets. The obverses of these *tesserae* are often based on Antinoös' portrait on the Alexandrian coins, but occasionally feature confronted heads of Antinoös and Isis. These unofficial objects show at the least that the Hellenic population of Egypt had accepted the Bithynian Antinoös as one of their own.⁴⁶

Kourion in Cyprus offers a short inscribed metrical hymn to the youth, surely dating to the remaining years of Hadrian's reign. A Roman or local official set up a text in which a poet addresses Antinoös as the personification of Eros—"violet-locked, beautiful-tressed, beatific, Bithynian, with charming countenance, offspring of a golden-winged mother" (i.e., Iris)—and himself a "messenger." The idea of Antinoös as an intermediary between gods and men was central to his appeal. At Mantinea, a father in an elegiac dedication of a statue to his deceased son asserts that the "god Antinoös, loving him, raised him up to sit beside the immortals."⁴⁷ Again, Sabina excited nothing like this devotion.

Sculptural Representations of Antinoös

Beauty was, of course, a key attribute of Antinoös, one that paved the way for widespread acceptance of his imagined supernatural powers. The physical description of Antinoös found in the Kourion hymn tallies well with the numerous sculptural portraits of the youth, most of which are heavily idealizing in the classical manner, that have come to us from all across the territory of the Empire. The fact that today we can count about a hundred such representations of Antinoös suggests that many thousands must have been created in the years following his death. K. Manchester sums up the main attributes of the main run of full-length sculptures and busts of Antinoös. "The sensual young Bithynian," says Manchester, is depicted "in the prime of his youth, with an unusually broad chest" as well as "an oval face; smooth complexion; striated brows above unarticulated, deep-set eyes with thick lower lids; an aquiline nose . . . and full lips." There is also an expected pose: "he gazes down, his head turned in the direction of his raised left shoulder." Yet "the most important feature of [Antinoös'] main portrait type," continues Manchester, "is the hairstyle"—which, as we have seen, the Kourion hymn singles out for special admiration. So distinctive are the curly hair locks that they have been used, for example, to secure the identification of a faceless sculptural fragment at the Palazzo Altemps in Rome (Figure 13).⁴⁸

There is, however, an important variant group, which depicts Antinoös in high Egyptianizing style. In 1739, excavations at Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli yielded a sensational find, a brilliant white marble (and



FIGURE 13. Bust of Antinoös: composite plaster cast (Art Institute of Chicago, obj. 228220), created by Studio MCM srl, reuniting long-separated Antinoös pieces of Chicago (Art Institute of Chicago, inv. 1924.979) and Rome (Museo Nazionale Romano Palazzo Altemps, inv. no. 8620).

Credit: Art Institute of Chicago

well over life-size) statue of Antinoös assimilated to the Egyptian pharaoh deified as Osiris. It is now exhibited in the Vatican's Museo Gregoriano Egiziano. Here Antinoös has his famous locks completely covered by the Egyptian starched-cloth and striped *nemes* headdress, which features on its front the uraeus device, a rearing cobra that symbolizes divine authority. Antinoös stands in a recognizable dynastic pose, shoulders high, with his left leg advanced and arms resting at his sides. His upper torso is bare but below he wears the *shendyt*, a pharaoh's pleated kilt. Another half-dozen or so have been found since then, most recovered from Hadrian's own Villa.⁴⁹

The natural conclusion from these finds is that the Egyptianizing sculptural types did not see mass production and wide circulation. It seems unlikely that these portraits were meant to disseminate the Egyptian understanding of Antinoös outside of that province. Rather, their main importance may be as private types that reflect Hadrian's

own classicizing sensibilities—in this instance extended to Egyptian classicism.⁵⁰

Perhaps the most informative of all Antinoös portraits comes to us from Antinoöpolis itself, and is considered to date to the first decades of the new city. A painted wooden tondo, now in Cairo, is a highly unusual double funerary portrait of two young men, variously identified as “brothers” or even “lovers.” Two statues are visible in the distance, at extreme left and right, above a shoulder of each—functioning, it seems, as their patron deities. The statue at right depicts Hermes-Anubis, and the one at left (as K. Parlasca has demonstrated) Antinoös-Osiris. The tondo provides us with the only representation of Antinoös extant in this medium—and suggests that he played a role alongside Hermes-Anubis in funerary rites, conducting the dead on their voyage to the afterlife.⁵¹

Foundation of Antinoöpolis

In contrast to Sabina, Antinoös did get a named city—Egyptian Antinoöpolis, on the site of a preexisting community on the east bank of the Nile roughly across from Hermopolis. It shows a carefully thought-out civic organization ostensibly formulated within days immediately following his death. The new foundation, established with suspicious speed on or about 30 October 130, was structured by tribes, each subdivided into demes. The offer of certain tax and legal benefits was meant to swell the ranks of citizens. A. R. Birley comes to the conclusion that before Hadrian even arrived in Egypt, he must have developed “plans to create a fourth fully-fledged Greek *polis*, alongside Naucratis, Alexandria and Ptolemais, and this to strengthen Hellenism in Egypt. No doubt he had a general idea where this city should be established, but he would wish to select the spot himself.” Birley continues that Antinoös drowned “more or less where [Hadrian] had planned to site a new city—which he had no doubt intended to call Hadrianopolis,” equidistant between two important centers of Hellenism. Those were, to the north, the district of the Heptanomia set up Augustus between the Delta and Thebes; and to the south in the Thebaid, Ptolemais.⁵²

This line of (well-informed) speculation has its attractions, especially since Hadrian placed so much of a premium on his reputation as a forceful promoter of Hellenism, and as a founder and refounder

of cities. Greek identity was demonstrably central to the character and purpose of Antinoöpolis—perhaps best seen in its conspicuous commitment to Greek-style athletics. At the time of the city’s foundation, Hadrian established at Antinoöpolis sacred games in perpetuity, to be known as the “Great Antinoeia.” They were held not in a cycle (as one would expect) but rather every year, with contests, which extended also to rowing races, for both boys and adult men. A Roman-style circus was constructed to host the athletic and (Greek-style) equestrian events, a structure that must rank as one of the largest and finest arenas of the eastern provinces. This superior facility—which the Antinoös obelisk on the Pincio already mentions, as well as the contests—no doubt contributed much to the success of these games, which continued at least into the mid-fourth century and sparked emulation elsewhere in Egypt.⁵³

Our literary sources have little to say about the Hellenizing aims of Antinoöpolis. Indeed, the emperor’s choice of specifically Antinoös as honorand, and the fact that he in person ordained the city in such proximity (both geographically and temporally) to Antinoös’ drowning, overshadowed whatever larger cultural project Hadrian had in mind, at least for our ancient elite writers who discuss the foundation. Indeed, for these authors, the success of the civic foundation—in later antiquity, Antinoöpolis even grew in importance—doubtless played its part in fueling resentment. Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, mentions its “sanctuaries of Antinoös, and his mysteries there.” So the youth’s cult was still functioning there in the latter part of the fourth century. But Aurelius Victor in the *Liber de Caesaribus* claims that it was no other reason than the creation of this city in the youth’s name that stimulated the nasty rumors that surrounded their relationship.⁵⁴

By a great stroke of good fortune, administrative papyri for Antinoöpolis reveal the names of all ten of its tribes and 42 of what must have been 50 demes. Here one finds as tribes the “Sebastian” (i.e., Augustus), “Nervanian,” “Trajanian,” “Aelian” (the emperor’s family name), “Athenian” (his cherished city), and “Hadrianian.” The rest are named after family members, more or less—“Paulinian” (his sister), “Matidian” (his mother-in-law), “Sabinian” (his wife), and “Osirus-Antinoan” (his companion made god). This nomenclature is of high importance for underlining who and what mattered the most to the emperor. A. R. Birley must be correct: “there can be no doubt that the choice of names was Hadrian’s own.”⁵⁵

The tribes in turn inform the names of their constituent demes, which seem to have been capped at five in each case. For instance, the known demes of Hadrianeios are *Zenios* (after Zeus), *Olympios*, *Capitolieus*, and *Sosikosmios* (“savior of the universe”). Or take the Matidian tribe, which includes demes named after Marciana (Matidia I’s mother), Plotina (Trajan’s wife), and *Kalliteknios*—“mother of beautiful children,” a tribute to her daughter Sabina (and, secondly, Matidia II). It is striking here to see Matidia I formally privileged over Plotina, on whom Hadrian lavished so much attention in both life and death.

And the Sabinian tribe? Demes that take their name from Hera (*Heraieus*, matching Hadrian’s “Olympian” demes); from Gamos (*Gamelieus*, or marriage); two with Eleusinian associations (*Trophonieus* and *Matalieus*, which would imply that the empress had been an initiate); and *Harmonieus*. This last one cuts two ways. Of course it connotes marital concord (Greek *harmonia*). But also, as Birley observes, the deme name may also refer to the Harmonia who was the wife of King Cadmus in Theban legend. The couple was supposed to have lived to an advanced age under the blessing of heaven—and then were whisked off to the Elysian fields, where they enjoyed eternal youth.⁵⁶

That myth, I should argue, or at least precisely the idea behind it, was to inform the self-presentation of both Hadrian and Sabina in the 130s. In a telling coin issue of Hadrian’s last years before his death in 138, the famously bearded emperor himself appears as a clean-shaven youth, albeit with long side whiskers. (He had turned 60 on 24 January 136).⁵⁷ The portraits of Sabina likewise changed over time, with her later lifetime sculptures and numismatic representations strongly idealizing the empress as a young serene beauty. A. Carandini more than anyone has set out the development in this regard of her portraiture, which is widely accepted, and which we shall explore more fully in Chapter 9.

Egypt and the Journey Home

It is in the weeks following the disappearance of Antinoös that we finally, for the first and last time, get direct evidence that allows us to place Sabina firmly in a certain place at a certain date. We have secure evidence that Hadrian, Sabina, and some number of their touring party on 19–21 November 130 visited the famous “singing” colossal statue—the so-called Memnon—in the necropolis of Thebes on the Nile’s western bank. That, of course, was less than a month after Antinoös’ death by drowning and the foundation of the city in his name. In fact, we have a (regrettably lacunose) inscribed statement from Sabina to prove her presence on the visit, carved on the lower left leg of the gigantic Memnon statue: “Sabina Augusta, (the wife) of Emperor Caesar Hadrian, has twice heard [Memnon] within the [?first] hour.” What is more, a high-born member of the imperial party, the Seleucid princess Julia Balbilla, commemorated the encounter of Hadrian and Sabina with the statue in four poems that total almost four dozen lines. Those poems are written in a sustained recreation of the long-dead Aeolic (or Lesbian) literary dialect, and are carved in close proximity to Sabina’s epigraph.¹

The “Singing” Statue of Memnon

The story of what is going on here requires some untangling.² The ‘Memnon’ is a seated figure of sandstone, almost 20 m in height (Figure 14). This statue was set up, along with a companion statue, to honor the pharaoh Amenhotep III (known to the Greeks as Amenophis),



FIGURE 14. Thebes (Egypt), Necropolis: the Colossi of Memnon.

Credit: Zoltán Róth (zolakoma)/Creative Commons

who ruled Egypt from ca. 1386 to ca. 1350 BCE. At some point the upper part of the northernmost of the twin monuments toppled to the ground; an earthquake of ca. 27 BCE is generally held to blame. But this mishap was to launch this statue into real fame. For a high-pitched noise started emanating from what remained on the statue base, especially in the early morning. In the mid-second century CE, the travel writer Pausanias compared the sound to “that of a *kithara* or lyre when a string has been broken.”

It remains an open question whether visitors to Egypt started equating these twin colossi with Memnon only after one of them started “singing,” for we have no Greek or Roman literary authority on the statues earlier than the geographer Strabo, who visited between 27 and 24 BCE, and said he heard the statue (or pranksters standing behind it) make a sound. But soon curiosity seekers started to come to see the vocal colossus, including the emperor Tiberius’ adopted son and heir, Germanicus, in 19 CE. For better or worse, some who came carved their impressions of the weird sound right onto this figure. We have 107 inscriptions in all in Greek and Latin, in both verse and prose. They range in date from the reign of Nero (54–68 CE) to that of Caracalla (198–217 CE), with more than a quarter to be placed in the era of Hadrian.

Many of these visitors interpreted the musical note the statue gave forth at the first rays of the sun as Memnon's greeting to his mother Aurora, the Dawn. In actuality, the noise probably had something to do with the moisture that had collected overnight in the fissured stone; the base expanded when warmed by the rising sun. Another commonplace of these inscriptions (and of our literary sources) is to blame the Persian king Cambyses II (reigned 530–522 BCE) for the statue's ruined condition, imagining that he mutilated it during his conquest of Egypt in the year 525 BCE, in which he notoriously killed the sacred Apis bull.³

It appears that local priests managed the site, providing information to tourists, and—as one source tells us—encouraging visitors to sacrifice to “the sun of Aethiopia and to Memnon of the Dawn.” It seems reasonable to suppose the priests also charged handsomely for the privilege of writing on the stone. For one thing, the Memnon inscriptions are not really graffiti but rather the work of professional masons, apparently contracted to do the writing on behalf of visitors. Also, the overwhelming majority of signatories are Roman military officers, soldiers, or administrators of rank—for instance, prefects of Egypt and governors of Thebes (and their wives) count for fully a fifth of the inscriptions. Plus there is just one inscription in demotic.

The practice of carving inscriptions onto the rock came to an end in the early third century. And eventually the statue stopped singing, perhaps, as G. W. Bowersock has argued, sometime shortly before the year 272, when Queen Zenobia of Palmyra had “rehabilitated” the seated figure in a makeshift manner with some blocks of stone. A glance at the statue as it appears today shows what must be the original head, but a chest composed of five upper tiers of a rougher, lighter sandstone than the base.⁴

The Memnon-Poet Julia Balbilla and Her Background

Of the Memnon inscribers, Julia Balbilla must rank as technically one of the most distinguished. She had as her maternal grandfather a man who served as prefect of Egypt under Nero, in which capacity he showed a deep interest in antiquities by having the Sphinx cleared of sand (for the first time in perhaps a millennium). He was also an expert in astrology—indeed, the son of the emperor Tiberius' court astrologer, Thrasyllus—who for a time headed the famous Museum in Alexandria.

Seneca calls this man, Ti. Claudius Balbillus, “exceptionally accomplished in every type of literature.” Our Balbilla was his namesake.⁵

Balbilla’s paternal grandfather, as she tells us in her inscribed poetry, was C. Iulius Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who happens to have been the last ruler (from 38 to 72 CE) of the small but wealthy kingdom of Commagene, in eastern Anatolia with a border on the Euphrates. Commagene was a possession of the Seleucid dynasty of Hellenistic kings, but it eventually (ca. 163 BCE) managed to assert its independence. For a long time, it was counted as the richest land in Anatolia—right up to 72 CE, the time of its total absorption by Rome, following the death of Antiochus IV. Amazingly, Balbilla’s father and uncle offered armed resistance to forces sent by the emperor Vespasian to annex it to the province of Syria.

The kings of independent Commagene had looked toward both east and west, and chose demonstrative dynastic epithets to advertise origins and allegiances. For instance, Mithridates I (reigned ca. 100–ca. 70 BCE), who married a daughter of the powerful Seleucid ruler Antiochus VIII (125–96 BCE), assumed his father-in-law’s cult name of *Kallinikos*, “splendid in victory.” The tag was well established for the Seleucids, dating back over 150 years, and indeed had been exclusive to this dynasty. The son of this new union, the later Antiochus I (reigned ca. 70–ca. 36 BCE), was styled—at least after death—as *Theos Dikaios Epiphanes Philoromaïos Philhellen*. Particularly interesting is Antiochus’ employment of *Epiphanes*, another traditional Seleucid epithet, and the ultra-inclusive combination of titles “lover of Rome” and “lover of Greece.” It is an extension of the same attitude that we see in this dynasty’s scrupulous oscillation of Iranian (‘Mithridates’) and Macedonian (‘Antiochus’) throne names.⁶

A century and a half later, we find the princes of Commagene making the same assertive claims. Tacitus knew of Balbilla’s father, Julius Antiochus Epiphanes, as a “king,” though he never had a kingdom. Indeed, numismatic evidence shows that he and his brother, Kallinikos, both represented themselves as “kings” of Commagene before losing it to the Romans. This Epiphanes married a daughter of Balbillus the prefect, called Claudia Capitolina, who in consequence got the title of *regina*, “queen,” keeping it even after her husband’s death, when she married another man who was to be prefect of Egypt.⁷

The head of family in the next generation scored impressive success under the Roman system without having to curb his dynastic

pretensions one bit. The full name of Balbilla's brother (discussed in Chapter 6) was named C. Iulius Antiochus Epiphanes Philopappus—this last element to be translated as “lover of his grandfather,” i.e., Antiochus IV, the last proper Commagenian ruler. (This strained epithet is unique among Hellenistic dynasts.) Philopappus was one of the first dozen or so men of eastern descent to reach the Roman consulship. Consul suffect in the year 109 CE, he incongruously also managed to retain the title of “king”—the first royal incumbent of an office created in 509 BCE to close the door on Rome's regal period. Thanks to his Commagenian royal descent, Philopappus and his sister could show links with the dynasties of Armenia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, Atropatene, Judaea, and elsewhere.

So it is not hard to see why Philopappus' sister, Julia Balbilla, found a prominent place on the imperial touring party, with close access to Sabina. (We need not suppose, as some have, that Julia Balbilla was the empress Sabina's answer to Hadrian's companion Antinoös, and that the two were lovers.⁸) First, claims to lofty ancestry surely played a large role in facilitating her acceptance in Hadrian's inner circle. On the one side there is her great-grandfather Thrasyllus and her grandfather Ti. Claudius Balbillus, both experts in astrology (a topic dear to Hadrian's heart). But the advancement of Hellenism also was a family concern: indeed, it is entirely likely that this Balbillus had started off his political career in Alexandria as an anti-Jewish envoy to the emperor Claudius. On the other side there were the Seleucids, and Balbilla's father and uncle, who fought under Titus in Judaea—a campaign commemorated, it seems, on the funeral monument of Balbilla's brother, assertively positioned on the summit of Athens' Musaion Hill. Hadrian would have appreciated this family history, and that is surely one reason Balbilla highlights her descent so loudly on the Memnon stone. Indeed, if Balbilla inherited not just her ancestors' studied reverence toward their past (as we shall see she explicitly claims) but also their attitude toward the Jews, this attitude might go a long way toward explaining how she found so privileged a position in the inner circle of Hadrian's court.⁹

Balbilla's brother and their Spartan cousin Herculanius also had befriended Hadrian well before his accession, and—as argued in Chapter 6—encouraged his adoption of Athenian citizenship (with registration into Philopappus' deme), holding of Athenian offices, and initiation at Eleusis. Though Philopappus was now deceased, Herculanius

would mark that friendship in his will by earmarking funds for the cult of Antinoös at Mantinea, and leaving Hadrian the sizeable island of Cythera, which had been a family possession. Thanks to her (maternal) family background, Balbilla also had an insider's grasp on Egyptian lore, which she takes pain to demonstrate in her Memnon-verse.¹⁰

Then there is Balbilla's actual poetry, whose academic tone seems superbly adapted to the intellectually competitive literary culture of Hadrian's court. When Balbilla wrote in the Aeolic dialect, it must have been in direct emulation of a leading light of the earlier corpus of Greek poetry—the seventh-century BCE poet Sappho, from the island of Lesbos. Though Sappho's poetry remained much-admired in the Roman imperial period, until now we do not find attempts actually to revive her long-dead Lesbian dialect. Balbilla's mastery of that dialect would have had an attraction in itself, which must have further recommended her to Hadrian.

The *Life of Hadrian* in the *Historia Augusta* tells us that the emperor painted; sang; played the *kithara*; studied astrology, arithmetic, and geometry—and surrounded himself with intellectuals only to mock, scorn, and grind them down. Dio and the *Historia Augusta* tell us he championed against Homer the “obscure” Antimachus of Colophon, the pioneer scholar-poet of the early fourth century BCE who took an obsessive interest in recondite points of mythology, language (including dialects), and geography—being especially eager to “correct” earlier tradition. Whatever the precise facts, it does seem clear that the emperor personally sought to revive archaic and forgotten authors, both Latin and Greek. And Hadrian's actual Greek verse—of which we possess a fair bit—betrays a painstaking study of the diction of Homer and Aeschylus, with some learned innovations of his own, reminiscent of Antimachus and the Alexandrians.¹¹ By taking on the formidable task of recreating archaic Lesbian verse, Balbilla had taken Hadrianic court culture one step beyond.

Balbilla's results, written in metrically flawless elegiacs, strike one very much as occasional poetry. They really are meant as panegyrics of Hadrian and his wife, Sabina, at a choice moment in time, known to us only through chance survival. Yet one suspects that Balbilla's poems on the Memnon statue were not entirely impromptu. The Memnon Colossus and the pyramids were arguably the top two tourist destinations in Egypt during this era, and Balbilla was well enough acquainted with Egypt to know that the emperor's visit was practically inevitable.

Hadrian, known to Tertullian as “the explorer of all curiosities,” was not going to pass up the opportunity to meet a singing statue. One cannot exclude the possibility of Balbilla performing her poems at the statue before they were set in stone. The size of Hadrian’s entourage, which to judge from papyrus requisition orders apparently numbered in the thousands (see Chapter 7), would have made for a large and presumably appreciative audience.

However, one can spare a thought for the professional stonemasons who had to carve the poems (there are two different hands), for whom Balbilla’s punctilious use of the obsolete letter of the digamma in her autograph copy caused deep confusion. For the modern purist, the meter is a problem: in the (admittedly scanty) remains of the genuine Lesbian poets, we do not find elegiacs. All the same, it appears that there were later in circulation epigrams ascribed to Sappho. If Balbilla required sanction for her Aeolic elegiacs, pseudo-Sapphic writings such as these would do; she would not be the only person to take them for the real thing.¹²

*Balbilla’s Inscribed Poems in praise of Hadrian,
Sabina, and Herself*

After all that (necessary) prolegomena, let us at long last turn to a survey of Julia Balbilla’s four poems carved on the left leg and foot of Memnon, and their relationship to the inscription where Sabina records that she twice heard the statue speak.¹³ The first three of the poems in the standard Bernand and Bernand edition have short prose prefaces, not in dialect, that provide bare context for the verses that follow. We shall discuss these poems in the order they were inscribed; they do not precisely correlate with the chronology of the events they narrate.

For the topmost piece (Bernand and Bernand no. 28), the words “Of Julia Balbilla, when Hadrian Augustus heard Memnon” introduce a verse composition of 12 lines in which the poet immediately asserts her authority. “I heard tell,” begins Balbilla, “that Egyptian Memnon, when burning with light of sun, speaks from the Theban stone” (lines 1–2). The verses that follow are written largely from the statue’s perspective, and emphasize communion and dialogue between divinity and emperor. Memnon sees that Hadrian has visited him before dawn, and “bade the all-powerful king welcome as best he could” (line 4), apparently

making only a faint sound. No surprise there: we have just been told that the warmth of the sun is integral to the phenomenon. But after “the second measure of hours” (i.e., 7 AM), “Memnon again let forth a voice, high-pitched as of bronze when struck; he issued also a third sound in welcome” (lines 5–8). The emperor is said to have responded with enthusiasm. “Lord Hadrian himself [then] loudly greeted Memnon and on [the monument] left for posterity an inscription declaring how much he saw and how much he heard, and it was clear to all that the gods love him” (lines 9–12). There is no mention of Sabina in the poem. Nor does Julia Balbilla claim to have been present for the occasion, though the closing lines emphasize that her epigraphic poetry is what will immortalize the encounter.

“When I was before Memnon with Sabina Augusta” (Bernard and Bernard no. 29) is the caption that prefaces the next poem, which puts a brave face on a wholly unsuccessful listening session by Julia Balbilla and the empress. Balbilla exploits the disappointing occasion to present a programmatic piece that trumpets her own identity as poet and princess. The result was much too long (at 18 lines) to fit completely into the available space on the leg below the first poem, which honors Hadrian; the last seven couplets have to continue alongside no. 28 to its right.

This second poem begins as an elaborate prayer in traditional hymn style to the statue. “Memnon, son of Dawn and venerable Tithonos, who sits facing Theban Diospolis—or Amenothe, Egyptian king (as say the priests knowledgeable in the ancients’ legends)—hail, and favorably bid welcome with speech even the reverend wife (*semnan alochon*) of lord Hadrian” (lines 1–6). Sabina, not mentioned by name, then disappears from view. Evidently the prayer did not find a response. Faced with silence, Balbilla employs her erudition to explain to the Memnon statue why it is finding it hard to speak. She invokes the (erroneous) tradition that the Persian king Cambyzes mutilated the monument; she specifies that he cut out its “tongue and ears” (line 7). Balbilla is careful to stress that Cambyzes did not get away scot free. Though the Persian king went on to slay the Apis bull, sacred to the Egyptians, Balbilla tells us he paid requital for his impious acts when he later jabbed himself with his own sword—a story well known from Herodotus. “But I do not think this statue of you would (thereupon) perish, and I sense within a soul hereafter immortal” (lines 11–12).

The basic sense is that Balbilla is able to perceive Memnon’s soul, something an irreligious person would not be able to do.¹⁴ But there

is more. Balbilla ends this poem by reciting her genealogy, which (it is implied) accounts for her powers of perception. “For pious were my parents and grandparents, Balbillus the Wise and King Antiochus: Balbillus the father of my mother—a queen; and King Antiochus, father of my father. From their stock I too have obtained noble blood, and these are my writings, Balbilla the Pious” (lines 13–18).

Like her brother, Philopappus, on his tomb monument at Athens, Julia Balbilla shows pride in their grandfather Antiochus IV Epiphanes (reigned 38–72 CE), the last Commagenian king. Indeed, grandparents and parents alike—including her mother, Claudia Capitolina “the queen”—are called *eusebeis* (“pious”). The adjective must have held some special significance for our poet, since Balbilla applies it also to herself, in emphatic position at the end of the poem. Now, it seems unlikely that Balbilla could call herself queen. The royal privilege, after Rome’s annexation of Commagene, must have been strictly confined, presumably to the one male who would have been king (and apparently his spouse as queen). In her poetry, Balbilla does not use a royal title—and, from what we know of her family, we can be sure it was not simply tact.

But *Eusebes* is a well-known Hellenistic dynastic epithet. Though it is not attested in the actual nomenclature of the rulers of Commagene, it was used by the Seleucid Antiochus X (ruled 95–83 BCE), whose sister had married into the Commagenian royal house. Balbilla in this passage must be exploiting the evocative adjective *eusebes* to draw attention to her Seleucid connections. For confirmation, one ought to remember that her father, her uncle, and of course her brother, Julius Antiochus Epiphanes Philopappus, displayed dynastic epithets. What we have is a masterful example of self-advertisement, artfully placed in a context—elaborate praise poetry—in which it was all too easy to violate propriety.¹⁵

One notes also that we find Sabina honored as the personification of *eusebeia*. Indeed, she is the first imperial woman to receive this assimilation. The main evidence? An Alexandrian tetradrachm dated precisely to this year (Hadrian’s regnal year 15 = 130/131) shows a bust of Sabina on obverse, and on the reverse the empress standing as Eusebeia.¹⁶ It seems reasonable to suggest that Balbilla, in so strongly emphasizing her own hereditary “piety,” sought in this way also to identify with the empress—or better yet, compete with her in this regard.

Julia Balbilla's third piece (Bernand and Bernand no. 30), prefaced by the title "When on the first day we did not hear Memnon," narrates Sabina's success in hearing the statue on the subsequent day. It consists of eight lines of verse, carved on the left leg directly below the second column of the previous poem. There Balbilla had made an elevated appeal to a distant incident in Egypt's history to explain Memnon's difficulty in speaking; here the poet uses light but still edgy humor to rationalize that embarrassing silence. The poem is important enough to quote in full.

Yesterday Memnon received the spouse (*akoitan*) in silence,
 in order that the fair (*kala*) Sabina might come back here
 again, for the lovely form (*erata morpha*) of my queen delights
 you. 'But let out a divine sound for her now that she has
 returned, lest even the King be vexed at you; for a long time
 now, fearless, you have detained his reverend wedded wife
 (*semnan . . . kouridian alochon*).' And Memnon dreading
 the might of great Hadrian suddenly spoke, and she hearing
 (him) was pleased.

This is panegyric with a twist. Balbilla offers the playful explanation that on the first day Memnon was charmed by the empress's seductive appearance (line 3 *erata morpha*, modeled on a phrase in Sappho), and kept silent because he wanted to see more of "fair Sabina." These physical descriptions leap to the eye. One does not elsewhere (especially in the epigraphic medium) find a Roman empress described with such intimate language. When the statue proves obstinate even on this second day, Balbilla does not make recourse to a further prayer. Rather, she reminds it that Hadrian—who apparently did not accompany Sabina on either of her two visits—will be angry if Memnon delays any longer his "wedded wife." The Greek, *kouridian alochon* (line 6), is a familiar Homeric phrase for a young bride. (Hadrian and Sabina, of course, had been married about 30 years at this point.) Significantly, it is out of fear of a potentially angry Hadrian that Memnon finally lets out a sound for Sabina. "She hearing (him) was pleased" (line 8)—so pleased that the empress, as we have seen, had her own response carved in large letters into the statue's left foot, noting competitively that she heard it twice (Bernand and Bernand no. 32 line 4).

Once again, in this poem Julia Balbilla manages to keep herself at the center of the reader's attention. First, the poet's references (line 3) to "my queen" Sabina's physical attributes do not merely suggest that she had an easy familiarity with the empress. Indeed, Balbilla seems clearly to be casting herself as Sappho—with a hint that Sabina fills the role of one of Sappho's "maidens" from Lesbos.¹⁷ Plus Balbilla represents herself as the mediator between Hadrian and Sabina on the one hand, and the divine Memnon on the other. It is Balbilla who delivers a command that is said to frighten Memnon into speaking, which in turn pleases Sabina and allows her to return to her impatient husband (lines 4–6, 7–8).

Balbilla's fourth poem (Bernand and Bernand no. 31), consisting of three elegiac couplets and a puzzling extra pentameter line, is carved on the left foot in much larger and deeper letters than her others, and by a different hand. It has no prose introduction. But here Balbilla records the precise time and date that she was present with Sabina when together they heard Memnon make his noise. The poem more than anything celebrates Balbilla. However, the empress Sabina tactfully is kept before our eyes—again with erotic overtones to her description.

The piece begins (lines 1–2) with another display of Egyptian learning. "I, Balbilla, heard from the rock as it spoke the divine voice of Memnon or Phamenoth." ('Phamenoth,' which is the name of an Alexandrian month, is a mistake for 'Amenophis,' and surely the fault of the mason rather than of the poet.) Balbilla continues (lines 3–6): "I came here with lovely (*erata*) queen Sabina, and the sun held the course of the first hour. In the fifteenth year of lord Hadrian, and Hathyr had twenty-four days." Then follows—perhaps after the mason has omitted one or even three lines from Balbilla's manuscript—a pentameter citing a second date, "And in the twenty-fifth day of the month of Hathyr."

This poem, taken together with the three prose prefaces and Sabina's own inscription, illuminates the chronology of the whole series. After an initial day without results (19 November 130), Julia Balbilla in the company of Sabina heard Memnon at about 6 AM on 24 Hathyr = 20 November. One assumes that Sabina's inscription in which she notes having heard Memnon "twice" refers to the same occasion. And the second date that Balbilla mentions, of 25 Hathyr = 21 November? As A. M. Cirio suggests, it might simply mark the day when Balbilla had this fourth (assertively personal) poem inscribed. Or it might refer to something else, especially if there is a lacuna. One still has to place the

(undated) occasion when Hadrian himself heard the statue, poorly before sunrise but then twice after 7 in the morning. One has the choice of Hadrian arriving before dawn on a day anterior to 19 November (the “first day” that Sabina and Balbilla visited the statue, without results); or making his way to Memnon early on 21 November, only after his wife has succeeded in hearing the famous sound. Whatever the case, it does not appear that Hadrian and Sabina sought the experience together. And whether Hadrian visited on an early or late date, one can sense a sharp competitive dynamic among emperor, empress, and the princess poet.¹⁸

And still others competed with them. In addition to Julia Balbilla, three women have left verses on the statue. That is a remarkable number, considering how few Greek and Roman female poets are represented overall in the ancient literary canon. One of these women, a certain Damo, seems to be closely associated with Julia Balbilla, with four lines inscribed on the same leg of Memnon—the choice left one, where the sun first struck—but above Balbilla’s work. Like Julia Balbilla, Damo employs the (long dead) Aeolic dialect coupled with elegiacs. This is really too much to be a coincidence: besides the verse of these two women, we have no other example from the empire of original verse composition in Aeolic Greek. What is more, Damo seems to echo quite deliberately also the basic structure, vocabulary, and themes of Balbilla’s second poem (Bernand and Bernand no. 29), in which she had described her first of two visits to the statue with Sabina, and heard nothing. Damo in her poem proudly registers the fact that Memnon did manage to speak to her, on the strength of her status as lyric poet. Though Damo does not mention Hadrian or Sabina in her short inscription, she probably was also a member of the imperial touring party. Indeed, she is probably identical with a wealthy Claudia Damo who is attested a few years later at Athens.¹⁹

So the story of Sabina’s visit to the necropolis of Thebes and the epigraphic record of her visit to the statue of Memnon animates, at least for a flashing moment, the empress in our understanding. In a sense, the Sapphic poetry of Julia Balbilla somewhat disappoints us as a source for Sabina, for it is clear that the poet’s main preoccupation is with underlining her own importance. And Damo in her verse has her eye only on Balbilla. Yet important side issues do present themselves, which include the integration of eastern “kings” and “queens” into the Roman imperial social system, the culture of Hadrian’s court and of educated

society in Hadrianic Athens (the probable home of both Balbilla and Damo), but above all the personal dynamics of the imperial touring party in Egypt.

It is striking to see that Sabina in her inscription just above the left foot of the Memnon statue does not try to engage with the efforts of these poets. Sabina leaves four lines in plain Greek prose, with no effort to show mythological or Egyptian erudition. Her letters are engraved at a height slightly less than those of Balbilla's fourth poem. "Sabina's lines give out a minimum of information," observes P. Rosenmeyer, specifying "her title, her husband's title, and the fact that she heard the statue speak not just once but twice"—which Balbilla did not mention in the relevant poem. "She writes formally in the third person," continues Rosenmeyer, "with no evaluative or emotional modifiers: in fact, six of the total of eleven words are personal names. Her words emphasize her status, as does the prime position on the lower left leg, easily accessible to the visitor's gaze."²⁰

Yet for all of Julia Balbilla's pomposity, ostentatious erudition, and self-advertisement in her Lesbian verse that describes her visit with Sabina to the Memnon precinct, the poet does succeed in highlighting the core attributes of what was (or soon was to be) the empress's developed, official public persona at this point. Those included (or were soon to include) youthfulness, seductive beauty, religious piety (which Balbilla implies is needed to hear Memnon's voice), marital fidelity within a framework of institutionalized jealousy, and (most important) communion with the immortal.

Return from Egypt to Athens

Once Hadrian, Sabina and their entourage had bidden their farewells to Memnon on or shortly after 22 November 130, it appears that they soon proceeded downstream to return to Alexandria. Details of Hadrian's remaining time in Lower Egypt—a full four or five months—are somewhat surprisingly sparse. It was clearly in Alexandria that the emperor and empress spent the winter. Final departure from the city was by ship, but not before mid-March. Articulation of the cult of Antinoös must have occupied much of Hadrian's attention during the intervening months. Indeed, Hadrian perhaps even returned to his new foundation of Antinoöpolis in March or April 131 for the inauguration of the

annual “Great Antinoan” games. But he made a grand gesture for his recently deceased sister, Domitia Paulina, introducing a new contest to honor her memory, the “Hadrianic Philadelphian” (i.e., “lover of his sister”).

And at this time, Sabina was presented much more prominently on the Alexandrian coins than two years previous, when a series had started showing paired busts of Hadrian and Sabina, respectively on obverse and reverse. On those of 130/131 (invariably billon tetradrachms), her portrait now appeared for the first time on the obverse; on the corresponding reverses, Sabina is depicted in full figure, either seated as Demeter/Ceres or standing as the personification of Eusebeia. These types seem to be almost commemorative issues, related to the imperial visit. In subsequent years, Sabina never again occupied both obverse and reverse on the billon Alexandrian coinage.²¹

And after Alexandria? It is challenging to reconstruct the precise route that Hadrian and Sabina followed upon their departure from the city before reaching Athens, where they wintered in 131/132. H. Halfmann reasonably postulated on the basis of the epigraphic remains first a sailing voyage along the coasts of Syria, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Lycia, and Ionia, aiming at Ephesus. In 2015 H.-C. von Mosch and L.-A. Klostermeyer sought to add greater precision to this picture by exploiting the evidence of the physically large and stylistically similar medallions that various cities in Asia Minor (and Old Greece) minted in commemoration of Antinoös, taking these to imply an imperial visit.²² They posit next—after possible stages at Miletus and Ephesus—Cyme in Aeolis (where one finds Antinoös medals), then trace a route northeast through the interior of Mysia and Lydia into Bithynia and its coast. The stops they suggest include Pergamum (probably), and then Stratonicea-Hadrianopolis, followed by four cities that mint Antinoös commemoratives: Hadrianotherae in central Mysia, and Cius, Nicomedia, and Calchedon in Bithynia.

The general outlines of this route seem plausible, though there are difficulties, as always, pinning down the precise details. As we have several times noted, evidence of individual cities’ production of numismatic and epigraphic honors—even the construction of inscribed arches or other buildings dedicated to the emperor or the imperial couple—do not necessarily equate with the emperor’s actual presence. Plus several of the undated points assigned to this leg of the journey can

just as readily belong to the outbound travel from Athens of 129/130, as the return to that city in the year 131.

However, what is certain is that Hadrian and his party, after leaving Asia Minor, visited both Maroneia and Abdera on the coast of Thrace. Halfmann imagined also an excursion north at this time, taking in Moesia and Dacia. More plausibly, the entourage simply continued south through Macedonia, with a visit to Philippi, to arrive at Athens in fall 131. The city may have served as a base for further side trips in the winter months that followed. Those likely included Corinth and the Isthmus, plus Mantinea, to attend festivals in which Antinoös featured.²³

One is hard pressed to find material evidence on Sabina that must belong to this journey. There is just one dated item from the relevant period, a Latin inscription from Pisidian Antioch of 130/131 that honors Hadrian and Sabina *Augusta*. It was situated on the exterior of the city gate donated by local notable C. Iulius Asper Pansinianus, and originally had letters in bronze. The date and context strongly imply the expectation of an imperial visit. However, the location—in Galatia, more than 200 km north of Attaleia (Antalya) on the Pamphylian coast—was surely too far inland to figure on this occasion.

We do have about a dozen inscriptions (mostly on statue bases) dedicated to Sabina, sometimes jointly with her husband, that conceivably can be linked with her return journey from Egypt. The most likely candidates come from Cestrus, near the coast in western (Rough) Cilicia; Magydos in Pamphylia; and Rhodiapolis, as well as Patara and Tlos in Lycia. The *demos* (People) of the minor town of Cestrus set up a joint dedication in Greek to Hadrian, with expansive patronymics and the title “Father of the Fatherland,” and (simply) to *Sabina Sebaste*. In the coastal town of Magydos, the dedication to *Sebaste Sabina* was a result of private initiative on the part of one Julia Sancta. The same woman is known to have extended her philanthropy also to nearby Attaleia (modern Antalya), where she paid for a tower and strikingly showed her devotion to the imperial house by dedicating a statue of Hadrian’s sister, Domitia Paulina, one of only two statues attested outside Italy. At Rhodiapolis the *koinon* (provincial assembly) of the Lycians took great effort, choosing a massive base for paired statues of the imperial couple.²⁴

Most elaborate, however, are the honors that one Velia (or Vilia) Procla (or Procula) paid in Lycia at Patara and nearby Tlos to the imperial family, with special focus on Sabina. Thanks to an inscription of 147

CE, this wealthy woman is perfectly well known. Her father, Q. Velius Titianus, had started construction and decoration of the *proscenium* of the spectacular Roman theater at Patara; Velia Procla herself contributed other elements to the structure, and dedicated the ensemble to the emperor Antoninus Pius.

What concerns us here are two of Velia Procla's earlier named dedications. First, there is a dedicatory inscription on a limestone fragment from Tlos, which she and a Claudius Flavianus (apparently her husband) set up to *Sabina Sebaste, Nea Hera*. And at Patara, the same pair erected a statue on a long base inscribed to Hadrian as "savior and benefactor of all their house." Velia Procla then in separate inscriptions alone claims the credit for two flanking statues of imperial women. One of these statutes commemorated a relative of Hadrian—the inscription lacks the name, which should be that of Domitia Paulina but just possibly Matidia II—as "benefactress." The other honored Sabina (the name is lost, but not the title of Hadrian's "wife") as "her personal goddess (*idia thea*) and benefactress." A generation later, still on the same base, the children of Claudius Flavianus and Velia Procla expanded the statue group with the addition of Marcus Aurelius flanked by the empress Faustina II and the co-emperor Lucius Verus, both praised for their benefactions in similar terms.

Patara offers two more items of relevance: an altar inscribed to *Sabina Sebaste, Nea Hera*, and a limestone statue base with the same wording. The first of these objects implies actual worship of the empress, during her lifetime, in the guise of Hera. Though there is no dedicator named in either instance, one suspects once again the hand of Velia Procla, who is so explicit elsewhere in voicing her devotion to the empress—including at Tlos as "New Hera." Indeed, the balance of evidence suggests that Hadrian, his sister, Domitia Paulina (or possibly sister-in-law, Matidia the Younger), and especially Sabina paid personal and specific favor to this rich woman and her family, surely in Lycia itself, during a stopover in her city. She in turn advertised the connection, in similar spirit though with more tact and restraint than Plancia Magna at Perge in Pamphylia (on whom see Chapter 6). Alas, we cannot ascertain the missing "benefactress" who flanked Hadrian in Procla's statue group. If it were Paulina (who died in Egypt), that would guarantee a date of 129, as opposed to 131.²⁵

There remain a few more inscriptions from Anatolia mentioning Sabina that conceivably were set up in response to the imperial

itinerary of 131, from Tralles in Caria (two joint dedications to Hadrian and Sabina), Hierapolis in Phrygia, and the coastal city of Magnesia on the Maeander in Ionia. The Council and People of Hierapolis reused a block, erasing a previous inscription, to honor Sabina *Augusta*. At Magnesia, Sabina *Augusta* is identified in a lacunose inscription not just as wife of Hadrian (with his full filiation) but also as “daughter of the divine (?) Matidia” (who died and was consecrated in 119). Strictly speaking, the divine matronymic is unparalleled in inscriptions honoring the empress, though (as we shall see in Chapter 10) it will become common in those naming her sister, Matidia II, who lacked the formal title of *Augusta*.²⁶

More significant in terms of both context and content is a joint dedication in Latin to Hadrian and Sabina from Philippi in Macedonia, which is almost certain to have hosted the imperial party in 131 as they made their way to Attica. The dedication honors “Emperor Hadrian Olympius and Juno Coniugalis Sabina.” Hadrian had carried the title *Olympios* (i.e., assimilating him to Zeus or Jupiter) since 128/129. A corresponding assimilation of Sabina to Hera or Juno is common; indeed, we have just seen it on a grand scale at Patara in Lycia. But *Coniugalis* (“of marriage”) is an epithet otherwise unrecorded for Juno—or indeed any other named divinity. It comes off as an instance of the same sort of hyperbolic praise for the integrity of the imperial couple’s marriage bond and depth of affection that Julia Balbilla invoked in her poems on the Memnon colossus.²⁷

Athens 131/132 and the Third Journey’s End

Hadrian surely intended his stay at Athens in winter 131/132 to serve as the capstone of the entire Third Journey. On this occasion Hadrian inaugurated with a splendid celebration the massive temple of Olympian Zeus that he undertook in 124/125 to complete, finishing work begun under Athenian tyrants in the 520s BCE. In a coordinated measure with the inauguration of this Olympeion, the emperor also formally founded the ‘Panhellenion,’ a new Roman-initiated association of (selected) Greek states, one that would retain its character and importance into the third century CE. Criteria for selection to this new league were narrow. The evident exclusion of major, indisputably Greek cities such as Pergamum, Ephesus, Smyrna, Antioch, and Alexandria

from membership suggests that the emperor aimed not to further privilege the overprivileged great cities of Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. Nor did he permit the venerable Greek colonies of the Italic west to join. Rather, the goal seems to have been to enhance the prestige of Athens, Eleusis, and Old Greece in general, and elevate the cultural, religious, and civic life of targeted smaller eastern cities that could show good Greek foundations. Thus we find membership extended to the *koina* of areas that could be deemed peripheral (Macedonia, Thrace, Crete) or troubled (Cyrenaica, where Jews had massacred the Greek population in a revolt of 115 CE).

Hadrian designated Athens and Eleusis to serve as centers of the Panhellenion's activities, especially by forming a *synedrion*, or council, creating a new contest at Athens (the *Panhellenia*, first celebrated in late summer 137), and allowing the new members to build a sanctuary (whether at Athens or Eleusis, we do not know) for his own cult. The introduction of this selective supranational organization in turn stimulated a boom in new building, at Athens and in several other member states (most strikingly in distant Cyrene).

The evident requirement that aspirants for membership in the Panhellenion be able to demonstrate authentic "Greekness" also set off a scramble among cities outside Old Greece for reputable antecedents and so in turn brought a sharp uptick in diplomatic activity. One can see how this requirement might appeal to Hadrian's antiquarian interests and fondness for intellectual competition. But the embassies and counter-embassies that this new institution encouraged must have added greatly to the workload of what remained of his regime.

In addition to *Olympios*, Hadrian now acquired (in 132) the title of *Panhellenios*—as well as *Panionios*, granted to him by the Ionian League, whose members were mostly excluded from his new league. There is much more to be said on these developments. However, to focus on our primary concerns, we note that this highly productive sojourn at Athens in 131/132 greatly boosted Hadrian's image as Zeus, and by association, that of Sabina as Hera. It may be significant that, among the emperor's benefactions to the Athenians, the travel writer Pausanias reports first (after mention of the great Olympeion) a temple of Hera and Zeus Panhellenius.²⁸

So complete was Hadrian's success at Athens that some scholars have presumed that the emperor and his wife headed back more or less directly to Rome in 132. However, the epigraphic evidence for Hadrian's

use of the title *pro consule* (i.e., commander with consular power) for the relevant period strongly suggests that he was still outside Rome on 9 December 132 (as a military diploma published in 2010 shows), and returned at some point between then and 8 April 133. Clear confirmation comes only a year later, when we find Hadrian at Rome on 5 May 134 and at Naples in August or September of that same year.

Yet additional points also tell against an early return. First and most importantly, the fiery Jewish revolt led by Bar Kochba, which (as described in Chapter 7) flared up in late spring or early summer 132. As the epitomator of Dio tells it, “so long . . . as Hadrian was close by in Egypt and again in Syria, [the rebels in Judaea] remained quiet. . . . But when Hadrian went farther away, they openly revolted.” Their rebellion grew serious enough to require—as the epigraphic evidence clearly shows—the emperor’s personal presence in the field. It appears Hadrian experienced at first hand the revolt in its earlier stages in 132, and as a result instituted the extraordinary series of emergency measures that we have noted. Second, there is good reason to think that the emperor’s movements in 132 involved not just this forced diversion to Judaea, but also travel north to inspect Rome’s provinces on the middle Danube in late 132 or early 133.²⁹

Much must remain uncertain, at least for now, about the imperial party’s movements between departure from Athens (in spring 132), and reappearance in Rome (by April 133). It would be valuable to know where Hadrian was when he decided to backtrack to take the field in Judaea, and whether he brought Sabina with him to this front. Summer 123 offers a parallel for this type of snap decision, when Hadrian abruptly left the farthest western Mediterranean to confront Parthian problems in Syria (see Chapter 6). One guesses that in 132 when he felt forced to return to Judaea, he was near a coast and his fleet.

Evidence for Sabina’s presence on this expedition is entirely lacking. However, evidence from Ephesus does offer the possibility that Hadrian’s Judaeian expedition stimulated a new attempt to flatter the imperial couple. The Council and People of that city had been in the habit of dedicating statues to Sabina; we find bases inscribed to her dated to the years 124/125 and 128/129. In 132/133, however, the empress’s titles are noticeably enhanced. We find the Ephesians dedicating a statue to “Sabina the goddess Augusta” (*Sabina he thea Sebaste*), specifying her both as wife of Hadrian “son of Trajan Parthicus and grandson of [the] divine Nerva,” and “daughter of Matidia Augusta.” (They omitted to

note here that Trajan and Matidia were divinized, too.) The title that the Ephesians formulate for Sabina is unparalleled for this empress. Indeed, of the eastern cities, it is only at Ephesus where Sabina is called *thea* in a public dedication (including coins), whether in life or death. Also, the use of the matronymic in an inscription honoring Sabina seems new for Ephesus, and elsewhere exquisitely rare (we have just noted the sole instance, at nearby Magnesia). It does seem that the Ephesians here are trying to be innovative, just possibly in response to an imperial visit. And the location and date certainly fit well with Hadrian's compelled detour to the eastern Mediterranean, especially his return.³⁰

New Epigraphic Evidence from Epirus and Its Lessons

Von Mosch and Klostermeyer offer a speculative reconstruction of a return route that in its first stage takes the emperor from Athens to Epirus, with visits to Nicopolis, Dodona, and Dyrrachium. That much seems plausible: it would be surprising if Hadrian's plans did not somehow include travel to the coast of Epirus, an obvious point of embarkation for crossing the Adriatic.³¹

It happens that the most dramatic addition thus far to our epigraphic sources on Sabina has to do with the publication in 1987 of inscriptions carved on four small limestone altars from Nicopolis. They are all similarly dedicated to Sabina *Sebaste* in the guise of Artemis Kelkaia. Other inscriptional evidence shows that same city honored Hadrian on similar altars as *Zeus Dodonaios*, i.e., the divinity who was patron of the ancient and important tree oracle of Dodona, also in Epirus. Hadrian in those inscriptions bears the title *Olympios*, which suggests that his honors here came after 128/129. Sabina's designation as *Sebaste* (i.e., *Augusta*) implies the same. The fact that we know of nine altars in all for the imperial couple from the same lightly excavated site is striking in itself.³²

Who was Artemis Kelkaia? The one literary notice we have connects her worship with Attica, in the late archaic period. The Hadrianic-era writer L. Flavius Arrianus (Arrian), in his *Anabasis*, says that a statue of Artemis Kelkaia was included in the loot that Xerxes removed from Greece to Persia (in the year 480/479 BCE). But at Babylon in 324 BCE, in response to embassies from "the Greeks," Alexander the Great repatriated the object (among others) to Athens.

The connection of Artemis Kelkaia with Epirus is unclear. Now, Nicopolis was a foundation of Octavian, in commemoration of his naval victory over Antony and Cleopatra off the cape of Actium (Acarnania) in 31 BCE. He established the new city on the peninsula opposite that cape, and made that the home for quadrennial Actian Games (first in September 27 BCE). The formal cult apparently was established only with the foundation of the city, which soon saw the construction of a temple called the *Kelkaion* with a priestess dedicated to the goddess's worship. So the cult of Artemis at Nicopolis seems from the start a product of Roman imperial sponsorship, and one that was to enjoy an international audience, thanks to the city's major games. Additional physical evidence for the cult of Artemis Kelkaia is sparse, and does not admit so close a dating, other than to say it is post-Augustan.³³

Arrian—our sole literary source on the statue of Artemis Kelkaia at Athens—resided for some years at Nicopolis, where he was a student of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus and later published notes of his “discourses” in eight books (of which four are extant). Hadrian too had strong links to Nicopolis. The *Historia Augusta* says he and Epictetus had a close personal association, which probably dated back before the emperor's accession. Hadrian surely had visited Nicopolis at least once at emperor (see Chapter 4). It would not be surprising if the emperor also in 132 planned to spend some time in Nicopolis, especially since there is no indication that his friend Epictetus had yet died.³⁴

Numismatic evidence seems to suggest that the connection of Hadrian and Nicopolis was indeed close. Nicopolis had issued coins under Augustus and (to a limited extent) Nero, but then again not until under Trajan, with activity accelerating under Hadrian and Antoninus Pius. The reverses of three Hadrianic issues from the city show Artemis as huntress. This image may be our *Kelkaia*. Indeed, the coins of Nicopolis from this era may show the *Kelkaion* temple (an unusual round building in two stories with dome) and its cult statue. We have so few coin issues from this city that it is hard to tell whether the numismatic depiction of the temple with (indecipherable) cult image in the Hadrianic and Antonine era represents a real development or not. So K. L. Zachos's suggestion that we have precisely here the image of an actual statue of Sabina as ‘Artemis Kelkaia’ must remain a hypothesis.³⁵

The assimilation of Sabina to Artemis that we find on the altars is not surprising in itself. Chapter 9 shows that plenty of other cities in the east make the association, some (especially in Cicilia) quite emphatically. Hadrian's famous love of hunting is likely to have prompted this avenue of flattery, which seems just as much directed at the emperor as the empress. Yet one can only wonder whether the renewed attention at Nicopolis precisely to the cult of Artemis Kelkaia we see after 128/129 has to do with the expectation of an imperial visit on the return journey, the city's (ultimately successful) bid to join the new Panhellenion association,³⁶ or both. What is perfectly clear, however, is that the multiple Sabina altars of Nicopolis hint at the existence of a very different and more complex narrative than that offered by most of our other sources on the empress, especially the paltry and biased literary accounts.

Final Years in Rome

Sabina's Final Five Years: General Considerations

It is sadly typical of our literary sources that they have nothing to say about Sabina's presence on the great Third Journey to the east that filled almost a full five years, from late summer or fall 128 through the first months of 133. Nor do they feel the need to mention anything about the empress's activities once the imperial couple had returned to Rome. For the latter years of Hadrian's reign, what does attract the attention of our writers is the emperor's retreat to the Villa at Tibur (Tivoli)—which they portray as a descent into extravagant eccentricity and luxury—and also the emperor's failing health; his resulting adoption of the (even more sickly) L. Ceionius Commodus, who died just 18 months after his creation as L. Aelius Caesar; the regime's final cruelties; and Hadrian's eventual decision to appoint the *cos. 120* Antoninus as heir. That act came with the stipulation that Antoninus make further adoptions to secure the future of the dynasty. Then came the death of the emperor himself (on 10 July 138), and the Senate's absolute refusal to promote his memory or grant him divinization. Amid these rich topics, it is almost surprising that the death of Sabina manages to attract notice. But it does because our sources seize on it to illustrate Hadrian's late-life savagery, laying the blame at his feet. The fact that Sabina then received divine honors they pass over in silence.

As we have grown accustomed to expect, the material evidence tells a somewhat different story. On the one hand, the Villa at Tivoli, even in its present ruined and depredated state, shows a mind-numbing scale and magnificence for which the literary sources only somewhat prepare

us. The brick stamps alone suggest the magnitude of the project, for they show that construction of the Villa started as early as 123, and continued at least into 137.

The *Historia Augusta* biography of Hadrian allows two sentences to the Villa, representing it as a nostalgic monument to the emperor's travels, built "wondrously" with the purpose of commemorating "the most famous names of provinces and places." What we get by way of example is a bald list of eclectic sites in Athens (the Peripatetic school of the Lyceum; Plato's Academy; the Prytaneum, or state house), Egypt (only the notorious coastal resort of Canopus), Athens again (the Stoa Poilike, home of Stoicism), and then Thessaly (the Vale of Tempe, strongly associated with Apollo and the Muses). "And so that he omit nothing," concludes the biographer on a tendentious note, "he even fashioned an Underworld." Aurelius Victor in the *Liber de Caesaribus* is a bit more expansive on the Villa but not concerned with its program. He states that the emperor, "as happens when events are tranquil," completely decamped to Tivoli late in his reign. Indeed, he "handed the city over to L. Aelius Caesar"—rather, Hadrian had made this man commander for Pannonia—and then focused on continued building, banqueting, and art collecting.¹

The notion that in this period the emperor was wholly absorbed in detached luxury is readily refuted. Now, Hadrian in his later years did put significant energy into the public self-commemoration of his reign—for instance, the four elaborate series of coins struck at Rome in the period ca. 134–138 that memorialize the emperor's travels in the provinces and inspection of their armies (discussed in Chapter 7). And the emperor's 20th year in power (the *Vicennalia*) in 137 was celebrated throughout the empire. Documentary evidence from Egypt shows continued commemoration of that landmark even decades later on 13 December.²

However, real military problems persistently intruded. The Jewish revolt demanded serious attention well into 135; it is no earlier than the second half of that year that Hadrian allowed himself to take an imperial acclamation. And new trouble spots immediately presented themselves. Most seriously, the German frontier of Pannonia, where an actual war with the Germanic tribe of the Suebi broke out in late 135 or 136, soon necessitated Hadrian's appointment of his newly adopted heir, L. Aelius Caesar, to face it down.³ And the emperor's dated correspondence, which continues unabated into 138, offers specific proof of

sustained engagement with the business of ruling and attention to even routine administrative matters.⁴

Evidence for Sabina's Activities in Rome as Augusta

Rome and its vicinity offer also a few epigraphic items for Sabina specified as *Augusta*. These clues cannot be closely dated, but should refer to activity in either the year 128 (when she received the title) or the period following the return to the city in early 133. The *decuriones* (town councilors) of Gabii in Latium, 18 km east of Rome, honored Hadrian and Sabina Augusta together as “benefactors (*locupletatores*) of the municipality.” The Latin term is practically unparalleled, but should refer to the disbursement of actual funds. Other inscriptions from Gabii show that Hadrian gifted the town with an aqueduct (with construction starting already in 123), and restored a building in its archaic sanctuary of Juno. Perhaps the latter work somehow involved the empress, whose assimilation to Hera/Juno we have seen so energetically promoted in the east by the regime.

Then there is an inscription of the period 209–211 CE, probably from the Forum of Trajan in Rome, which records a dedication to the *matronae* by Sabina Augusta (alone), that later was restored by Julia Domna, the wife of emperor Septimius Severus (193–211). The information offered here is doubly unique. For it is the only specific reference we have to Sabina dedicating anything, whether in the city, in Italy, or in the provinces. And it is the sole instance we have at Rome of a dedication to the *matronae*.

The natural supposition is that both of the empresses were making a benefaction to or on behalf of the *ordo matronarum* (“order of married women”), an organization of elite women of Rome that finds occasional mention in our sources for both the Republic (for as early as the fourth century BCE) and empire. Our dedication “perhaps stemmed from a building in which they met,” suggests E. A. Hemelrijk. Indeed, the emperor Elagabalus (218–222) is said in the *Historia Augusta* to have further elevated the institution by building for the *matronae* a new house for this quasi-Senate on the Quirinal hill in Rome.⁵

Possibly relevant to the question of munificence are two examples of a lead pipe, labeled “of Sabina Augusta,” for conveying water. One of these pipes was discovered in Rome at the northwest corner

of Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II on the Esquiline hill. Another lead pipe, in this case inscribed “of Matidia, daughter of the Augusta,” was found nearby, south of the Piazza. This discovery, of course, opens up the possibility that Sabina and Matidia maintained a large private house, or neighboring houses, in the area. But the pipes may belong to a public bath in the vicinity that they donated, or even owned to generate profit. A ready water supply was at hand, for the aqueduct of the *aqua Iulia*, which originates at Frascati, terminates precisely in the modern Piazza. E. A. Hemelrijk has shown that for wealthy women of the Roman imperial era, the most common form of munificence was the construction of public bathhouses. Those in turn might include women-only baths. Given these data, it is tempting to connect those pipes with Sabina’s probable patronage of the *ordo matronarum* at Rome, and imagine that she and her half-sister provided a bath building for the women of Rome. However, this is all guesswork.⁶

We are close to exhausting our inscriptional evidence on Sabina’s possible activities at home after her naming as *Augusta*. There remain two series of brick stamps, dated respectively 123 and 132, which have been held to carry Sabina’s name in abbreviation to designate the brickyard (SABIN in the first instance, SAB AVG in the second). A common conclusion from this designation has been that the empress derived income from engagement in the Roman brick industry. This supposition poses no problem in itself. We have seen (in Chapter 1) that Domitian’s widow, the *Augusta* Domitia Longina, owned property that was producing bricks in 126. And a number of other imperial and elite women in this era, in Rome and further afield, can be shown to have rented out clay fields on their estates for the same lucrative purposes—including the empress’s half-sister, Matidia. However, H. Bloch long ago pointed out a hitch for this interpretation. The reading on the bricks of 132 is probably better taken as GAB AVG (= Gabinius Augustalis). That interpretation in turn casts doubt on the SABIN brickyards of 123, which need not be associated with the empress, given the frequency one finds the name ‘Sabinus’ in the Roman brick business.⁷

So where does this survey leave us? The direct evidence on Sabina’s activities as *Augusta* in and around Rome is disappointing. But even as it stands, the epigraphic record may point toward some (limited) euergetism on the part of the empress, apparently focused on the women of the city, and certainly on the town of Gabii, which was one of several

smaller towns in Latium that had succeeded in winning her husband's special favor. It is worth noting that Gabii was situated just about 10 km southwest of Tibur; the proximity to the imperial Villa goes some way toward explaining the interest of both Hadrian and Sabina in the town.

Indeed, we can take it as a given that Sabina spent a good portion of her final years in Tibur. As we have seen (Chapters 5 and 6), Sabina's family appear to have had a country home there, well before Hadrian even started building his gargantuan Villa complex in the area. Her mother, Matidia I, may have died at Tibur; at any rate, that is where the inscription preserving Hadrian's speech of 119 in her praise was found. Then there is the point—admittedly circumstantial—that Hadrian's Villa has yielded by far more sculptures of Sabina than any other site. There are fully seven representations that certainly have the Villa as their provenance. All seem to show Sabina as a mature empress, i.e., after the award of the title 'Augusta,' with various degrees of classicizing idealization.⁸

Coins at Rome for Sabina as Augusta

The most conspicuous expression of Sabina's heightened profile as *Augusta* comes from the mint of Rome. The empress's promotion on the coinage starts immediately with her creation as *Augusta* in 128—even before her husband assumes, in a coordinated gesture, the title *pater patriae*. Broadcasting of Sabina's imperial attributes then continues through the years of the Third Journey (128–early 133) and return to Rome, right down to the time of her death in (surely) 137 and apotheosis that same year.

The combination of changing styles in titlature and hairstyles gives hope of establishing something approaching a relative chronology for Sabina's coins. Indeed, R. Abdy has carefully constructed a plausible sequence of Sabina's issues, the technical details of which have found some discussion in Chapter 6, and will occupy us again shortly. Appendix 1 sets out his findings in tabular form, with references to the coin types. Put briefly, for the lifetime coinage Abdy posits a sequence of four main groups. The first two groups are small, comprising just six types in all. They can be dated quite closely to the year 128, and feature reverses without legends, depicting either a seated Vesta (a type familiar from coinage honoring Plotina) or a seated Ceres (in a new design).⁹

The third group of Sabina's Rome coinage is somewhat larger—18 types, in all denominations—yet also admits of reasonably precise dating. It should belong to the first phase of the great Journey to the east, down to the visit to Egypt in early fall 130. (Abdy's rationale for these dates is presented below.) The reverses in this third group all remain without legends. But the range of deities they show is broadened beyond the seated Vesta and Ceres. They include first the personification of a seated Concordia holding a *patera*, a common imperial type that Hadrian had already introduced in his own coinage.¹⁰ Then there is a standing Venus Victrix, holding a spear and helmet, with a shield at her feet. In the Republic, the cult of "Venus the Victor" had found among its devotees especially Sulla and Pompey the Great (who had built a temple for the goddess into the theater he constructed in Rome in the mid-50s). There was also a small shrine to Venus Victrix on the Capitol, in a mini-triad with "Genius of the Roman People" and Felicitas ("good fortune"). However, the appearance here of Venus Victrix is a first on the Roman imperial coinage. The goddess recommended herself subsequently to a dozen empresses and imperial women, starting with the coinage of Marcus Aurelius' wife, Faustina II, and down to that of Magnia Urbica, wife of Carinus (reigned 283–285). Venus Victrix is found also on the reverses of the coinage of ten emperors, from Septimius Severus (193–211) through Carinus.¹¹

Finally, in the third group we find a standing goddess with one hand raised, and another resting on her chest. P. L. Strack took this last unnamed figure as a representation of Pudicitia ("chaste modesty"). If accepted, that would mark her first appearance on the empress coinage of Rome. To be sure, Sabina's coins soon make much of the image of Pudicitia, explicitly labeled, both standing and seated. Hadrian himself had featured Pudicitia on one of his earlier reverse types. This appearance in turn provides a productive precedent for fully 13 or 14 later women of the imperial family, again for the time spanned by Faustina II to Magnia Urbica, and nine emperors.¹² "But Pietas with a single hand raised seems as likely," has noted Abdy.¹³

It is the fourth group that constitutes the bulk of Sabina's *Augusta* coinage. Here Abdy has assigned 90 different basic types, in seven sub-categories, that should have been struck in the period ca. 130/131 down to the empress's death in 137. These subcategories in turn fall into clusters that can be deemed "earlier" (ca. 130/131–135, about two-thirds of these coins) or "later" (ca. 135–137). This is a veritable tsunami of coin

types. They are marked off from the previous series by conspicuous changes in the empress's hair fashions (on which see below), frequent pairing of portraits of Hadrian and Sabina on obverse and reverse, or, when Sabina holds the obverse, introduction of descriptive reverses as the norm. Evidently this surge in output and shift in style should be associated with Sabina's return to Rome (originally scheduled for 132, but delayed due to the revolt in Judaea) and final years in the city.¹⁴

Hadrian's regime obviously put a premium on producing conspicuously original images to amplify and highlight the empress's imperial virtues. The most noticeable items in this fourth group are the coins with paired busts of emperor and empress, and also the reverses with the familiar figure of Concordia, both standing and seated, and legend *CONCORDIA AVGVSTA* (Figure 15). In combination, they come off as a heavy-handed attempt to emphasize Sabina's marital concord with her husband. The seated Vesta continues to appear, but Ceres drops out of view.

Yet the real hallmark of the coinage of this era is novelty. In the "earlier" cluster, we find most strikingly Sabina's association with the goddess Juno. The goddess's figure appears on the reverses with the legend, in the form of a dedication, *IVNONI REGINAE* ("to Juno the Queen"). The epithet 'Regina' refers to her membership in the Capitoline Triad alongside Jupiter and Minerva. Surprisingly, up to this point the figure of Juno had never been explicitly portrayed



FIGURE 15. Rome mint: *aureus* of Sabina = RIC II (Hadrian) 398 (ca. 130/131–135 CE). Obverse legend: *SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVGVSTVS P P*
Reverse: *CONCORDIA AVGVSTA*.

Credit: Classical Numismatic Group, from sale Auction 99 lot 634 13 May 2015

on Rome's imperial coinage. Earlier emperors seem hesitant to compare women of their house too plainly to the Olympian queen. Even the autocratic Domitian chose to exploit Juno's symbolic bird, the peacock, on coinage honoring his wife, Domitia Longina, and his niece, Julia, rather than directly portray the goddess herself. The peacock also appears on the reverses of Sabina's coinage in this cluster, both alone (with tail spread, on a *quinarius*, i.e., half-*denarius*, type) and accompanying Juno. Coins of 16 later imperial women through Magnia Urbica portray Juno Regina on their coins. Already the empress Faustina II drops the "dedication" form of the goddess's legend and labels her more assertively in the nominative case, which sets a fashion for all who follow her.¹⁵

Sabina's assimilation to Venus Genetrix ("Venus the mother") in the Rome coinage of this era marks another first. In the Republican period the Julian family had made much of its mythological progenitor Venus explicitly in her guise as 'Genetrix.' And in Tiberius' reign Julia Augusta (= Livia) was presented in Baetica as GENETRIX ORBIS ("mother of the world"). Yet this is the first appearance of Venus Genetrix as such on the imperial coinage. Again, previously there may have been some diffidence to compare expressly an empress to the goddess in her role as mother of Aeneas, and thus ancestress of the entire Roman people. Once again, Sabina's precedent marked a turning point. Venus Genetrix became reasonably common on coins of empresses from Faustina II through Magnia Urbica, seven in all.¹⁶

But there is more, namely, personifications of Pietas (or Pietas Augusta), Pudicitia, and 'Indulgentia Augusta.' Of these, Pietas Augusta had recently appeared under Trajan on coinage honoring Sabina's mother, Matidia I, while Pudicitia (as we have seen) was wholly new. Both these types triggered further emulation in the empress coinage. PIETAS AVGVSTA (and its variants) can be found on the reverse types of 15 imperial women up through the issues honoring Gallienus' wife, Salonina; PVDICITIA (from the mid-third century, regularly PVDICITIA AVGVSTA) is attested for a long succession of both emperors and empresses into the 280s. INDVLGENTIA AVGVSTA was also new. Indeed, it received a double introduction, for it appears on the coins of Hadrian in this same era (i.e., 132–134). It then features on the coins of successor emperors through the pretender Macrianus and his son Quietus in 260–261. As far as the relevance of 'Indulgentia' to Sabina is concerned, one remembers that it was a quality that Hadrian

had singled out for praise in his speech of 119 for her mother, Matidia I. However, few later empresses claim the virtue as their own: only Faustina II, Julia Domna (jointly with her husband, and then specifically toward the Carthaginians), and Gallienus' wife, Salonina.¹⁷

Innovations in the Later-Lifetime Coinage of Sabina from Rome

The fourth (and final) group of the lifetime Sabina coinage minted at Rome has a "later cluster" that R. Abdy places in the period ca. 135–137. Almost all the coins that depict Sabina on obverse have descriptive reverses: in fact, mostly continuing basic types that we have already encountered for the "early cluster." So we see Vesta (seated) and Concordia (seated and standing), Juno Regina and Venus Genetrix, and Pietas Augusta. Ceres is still absent, and Indulgentia now vanishes.

But this "later cluster" also introduces three wholly new reverses. The first one is only apparent: bronze *dupondii/asses* with the legend LIBERTAS PVBLICA, depicting a standing statue of Liberty holding a *pileus* (the freedman's characteristic cap) and scepter. It was the emperor Galba who first used this reverse type, followed by Vespasian, Nerva, and then Hadrian himself; its association seems to have been regime change (but not too much change) and new beginnings. One does wonder what message it was meant to convey in this instance, coming so far into Hadrian's reign, with both the emperor and empress coinage sharing this reverse type. Perhaps we should view it as a now-traditional form of reassurance to the Roman People, in this case linked specifically to Hadrian's return to Rome, after the completion of his long Third Journey that spanned the years 128 to 133. No subsequent imperial woman used the type.¹⁸

Next, the legend VICTORIA AVG(usta), attested for the reverses of *denarii* in two types (seated and standing) that belong to the same late subgroup. Again, Hadrian's emperor *denarii* show precisely these same two reverses, as well as (on *aureilquinarii*) a type of standing Victory with wreath and palm that the Sabina issues do not share. It is widely held that these VICTORIA AVG reverse types on the emperor coinage make reference to the victory (ca. 135) over Bar Kochba in Hadrian's war against the Jews. In discussing their appearance on these Sabina hybrid *denarii*, R. Abdy is cautious on the purpose, but finds the types are consistent with the assumed date. Again, the legend (including its variants) does not reappear on the coinage of later imperial women.¹⁹

The last of our novel types in the same “hair down” subgroup of Sabina issues is a *sestertius* showing her portrait with (unusually) a hairstyle associated with her Egyptian sojourn (on which see below), and anepigraphic reverse depicting the Phrygian goddess Cybele riding a lion while holding a drum and scepter. This cult of this deity, also known as the “Great Mother” (*Magna Mater*), had arrived in Rome in 204 BCE, toward the end of the Second Punic War (218–201); in 191 BCE Rome saw the dedication of a temple and annual April games in her honor (the *Ludi Megalenses*). Though Cybele was a favorite subject for moneyers in the last generations of the Republican era, she is absent from imperial issues minted at Rome until the reign of Hadrian.

So this *sestertius* with Sabina/Cybele (on lion) marks the debut of this goddess on the actual imperial coinage of Rome. Cybele almost instantly became popular in this medium, with appearances on the coins of Faustina I and II; Lucius Verus and his wife, Lucilla; and Commodus. It is not too much to suppose, especially given the context of the related LIBERTAS PVBLICA and VICTORIA AVG types, that the innovative Cybele *sestertius* was meant to celebrate Sabina’s return from the eastern travels, the Megalensian Games of one of the years of the period 135–137, or both.²⁰

Dated Provincial Coins and the Development of Sabina’s Public Image

So far we have said little about the depiction of Sabina herself on the lifetime *Augusta* coins. Before we have that discussion, it is useful to see how the cities of the eastern provinces chose to commemorate the empress. Luckily, several cities honored Sabina in her lifetime by issuing coins that bear explicit dates. Those issues offer us some hope of tracing development in the empress’s iconography, not just in the relevant provincial cities but also in Rome itself.

Virtually all of the provincial coins identify Sabina by the title *Sebaste* (= *Augusta*), and so could not have been struck before 128 CE. We have already mentioned tiny Gaba in the province of Syria, for which we have a surprising coin featuring Sabina on the obverse (with unofficial title *Sebaste*) from the year 116/117, and then another dated to 133/134. That earlier issue stands almost completely in isolation.²¹ A key point is that the impressive dated series of Sabina coins from Alexandria

in Egypt started only in 128/129, evidently following the lead of Rome. So does that of Aegeae in eastern Cilicia, with a Sabina/Tyche type in 128/129, followed in later years by Hadrian/Sabina coins.²²

Of particular importance for our study is the output of Amisus in Pontus, which produced silver coins with Sabina on obverse from 134/135 through (significantly) 137/138. The reverses of these coins keep changing, and feature various gods and goddesses; their last issue for Sabina (137/138) shows a nude Aphrodite kneeling with mirror, modeled on a famous statue attributed to the Bithynian sculptor Doidalsas. Since the local era of Amisus commenced at some point in the summer, that means the minting officials of that city must have thought Sabina was still alive at least in summer 137. Confirmation on the late date comes from the far eastern portion of Cilicia, where the town of Epiphanea also has yielded a Hadrian/Sabina coin, to be assigned to 137/138.²³

This list is not a lot of dated coins. They represent the output of just five cities in all, amounting to about 40 different types, with Alexandria providing more than half of that material. However, the fact that all of these cities continued minting issues honoring Sabina after the conclusion of the Third Journey in early 133—indeed, in two instances, down to what must have been the year of her death—demonstrates that the provincial coinage for the empress did not primarily serve to commemorate her grand sojourn in the east.

Coins and Inscriptions from the East Honoring Sabina Sebaste: An Overview

Fortunately for our study, U. Hahn, in a comprehensive 1994 work, dealt squarely with the copious, difficult, and (to us) sometimes incoherent material that coins and inscriptions offer for the Roman ruler cult as it related to imperial women, from Livia through Sabina.²⁴ From the Greek east, from about 40 cities and towns, we have more than 60 inscriptions that mention Sabina, either in conjunction with Hadrian or alone. The majority of these come from statue bases. Only a handful of these epigraphical texts predate her naming as *Augusta*, as discussed in Chapter 6. Of the rest, roughly two-thirds present no more specific title than *Sebaste*. However, the remaining one-third attach elaborated titles (especially those connoting divinity) to the empress's name, and thus offer a valuable glimpse of her contemporary reception. Some of

those inscriptions are carved on actual altars and thus, as Hahn rightly argues, imply worship.

The sheer quantity of provincial coins relevant to Sabina—in excess of 200 types from over 80 polities—far outstrips the corpus of her inscriptions. For the Hadrianic period, those issues include what M. Amandry calls “true provincial coinages,” especially the large silver pieces known as *cistophori* struck in the province of Asia; “coins of provincial or regional *koina* [i.e., provincial leagues] . . . local coinages of Greek cities where an imperial portrait may or may not appear . . . and coins of colonies or of Roman municipalities.”²⁵ For Sabina, we find issuing authorities in all of these categories, though just one *koinon* (that of Bithynia, which minted enthusiastically for the empress in silver and bronze), and only a few colonies (Corinth and Patras in Achaea, Apamea in Bithynia, and Hadrian’s refoundation of Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina).²⁶

We find Sabina presented on those coins in about a half-dozen basic contexts. Occasionally we see mints (invariably those of Asia) place facing portraits of Hadrian and Sabina on obverse, with a reverse that can range from a simple ethnic to portrayals of heroes, divinities, or architectural forms. Parium in Mysia was unique in placing Hadrian and Sabina on reverse. These types together account for just about eight percent of our total. Twice as many types feature a head or bust of Hadrian on obverse and a bust of Sabina on reverse. The distribution of such Hadrian/Sabina coins is concentrated almost exclusively in the eastern Mediterranean—Alexandria in Egypt, Judaea, Cilicia—with just two examples from Asia (a *cistophoric* issue of Hierapolis, and a coin of Lampsacus), and none elsewhere. Very rarely is there an attempt to pair an obverse portrait (head or bust) of Hadrian with a reverse portrait of Sabina in full figure, seated or standing; we see this pose at Alexandria, and in three of the *cistophoric* issues, but elsewhere only at Ilium (Asia). The rest of our empress coinage, fully three-quarters of the total, shows a bust of Sabina on obverse and a miscellany of images on the reverse. All of the provinces that mint Sabina types produce that combination: Egypt, Judaea, Cilicia, Asia, Bithynia and Pontus, Thrace, Macedonia, and Achaea.

For Hadrian alone, *Roman Provincial Coinage* III lists about 3050 types, almost half of which are from Alexandria. So in terms of types, the coinage of this emperor compared to that of his empress (portrayed with or without the emperor) stands at about a 14:1 ratio. In comparison,

Trajan generated about 2900 provincial types, with Alexandria contributing slightly more than half; Plotina for her part was featured on 34. The ratio there is almost 85:1. Sabina clearly enjoyed much more prominence on the provincial coins than her predecessor. Still, there were significant parts of the eastern empire that minted at least in some measure for Hadrian but produced nothing for Sabina. These places include Crete and Cyrene, Arabia, Syria, Lycia and Pamphylia, Galatia and Cappadocia, the Black Sea coastal regions of Thrace and Lower Moesia, and Epirus.

Most of the coins that do feature Sabina are in bronze. Only a small proportion of her total number of types are struck in silver: a few cistophoric coins from various mints in Asia and Bithynia (a half-dozen known types bear the empress's portrait); the billon issues of Alexandria; the coins of Amisus in Pontus; and some of the issues from a tight cluster of cities in Cilicia (Tarsus, Mopsus, Aegeae). Why Cilicia? The province had benefited enormously from Hadrian, who created a new *koinon* for it, with Tarsus (now with the epithet 'Hadriane') at the center. The minting practice of these Cilician cities is instructive. All three struck Hadrian/Sabina types in silver. But when they placed Sabina on the obverse, they used bronze for the types.²⁷

The Cities' Pairing of Sabina Obverse Portraits with Reverse Images

When the Roman provincials placed Sabina's portrait by itself on the obverse, they paired it with over 60 different basic reverse images. A glance at *Roman Provincial Coinage* III shows that patterns do emerge. We can dispense with full references for these rough and ready lists; I also leave the question of express assimilations of the empress to deities to the side for the moment. By far the most popular pairing is Sabina/Artemis, especially in the goddess's manifestations as huntress (found in nine cities overall in Achaea, Thrace, the province of Asia, and Pontus), or as represented by the cult statue of Artemis of Ephesus (seven cities, all in Asia), or as bringer of light (Alexandria, Hadrianeia). Next is Demeter (nine cities, including Alexandria in Egypt, Perinthus in Thrace, Amisus in Pontus, and six cities in Asia), always depicted as standing and usually veiled; Persephone appears on the Sabina reverses of Magnesia

ad Maeandrum in Asia. Third in frequency is Asclepius (Corinth in Achaea, and seven cities in Asia). Fourth is the coupling of Sabina on obverse with the Tyche of a given city on reverse (Patras in Achaea, Amphipolis in Macedonia, Caesarea Germanica in Bithynia, and Cyzicus, Miletus and four other cities in Asia, Mallus and Aegeae in Cilicia), or river god (which we see for Smyrna, Sardis, and Iulia Gordus in Asia), or its eponymous or local hero (Cyzicus again, also Corinth).

Several Olympian deities have about the same level of prominence on the Sabina provincial reverses: Apollo (Sinope in Pontus, and four cities in the province of Asia); Athena (Patras and Corinth in Achaea, Apamea in Bithynia, and four cities in Asia); and Dionysus (the island of Tenos, which was attached to the province of Achaea; Perinthus in Thrace; and Hadriani ad Olympum and Saitta in Asia). However, only two cities issued Sabina/Hera coins, namely, Perinthus and Amisus; only Amisus minted a Sabina/Aphrodite combination. Other common pairings are Sabina/Cybele (on a cistophoric coin of Smyrna, plus on issues of four other cities, all in Asia) and Sabina/Isis (exclusively at Alexandria and in Ionia, at Aegae, Cyme, and Lebedus).

Personified abstractions on the Sabina reverses are not so common: we find Nike (Alexandria in Egypt, Laodicea in Asia); Dikaio-syne, or Justice (Alexandria, Cius in Bithynia); Hygiaea, or Health (Corinth, Aezani in Asia); and isolated instances of Securitas (Amisus in Pontus), and perhaps Homonoia (Magnesia ad Sipylum in Asia). About 40 reverse images used on the Sabina coins—i.e., almost two-thirds of the total—are unique to one polity. These coins include depictions of divinities both male (Zeus, Ares, Hermes, Heracles, and—at Alexandria—Hermanubis and Sarapis) and female (Hecate, Coronis).

The city of Seleucia on the Calycadnus river in Rough Cilicia (= modern Silifke) minted what *RPC* identifies as an image of the Phoenician maiden Europa sitting on a bull, holding a billowing veil over her head. The basic myth is that Zeus chose this animal form to abduct and then rape her. If the identification is accepted, then that is the most bizarre of these one-off Sabina reverses.²⁸ However, the reverse may not depict Europa at all, but rather the bull-handling Artemis Tauropolos, worshipped especially at Amphipolis in Thrace, but whose cult spread elsewhere, including Asia Minor. Her iconography on the

Amphipolitan coins is essentially the same as that of numismatic depictions of Europa elsewhere. And, as we shall see, the cities of Cilicia made special efforts—more than any other place in the Greek world—to honor Sabina as Artemis.²⁹

*The Provincial Coins Honoring Sabina:
Problems of Interpretation*

For many of our numismatic items, the relevance of the empress's presence on the obverse to the subject matter of the reverse is hardly clear from the coin itself. One obstacle for interpretation is that the coins do not bear descriptive titles for Sabina over and above *Sebaste* or *Augusta*. Put another way, no city employs its issues to indicate her expressly as *thea* ("goddess"), Hera, Demeter, Artemis, or the like. Another complicating factor is that an individual city might pair Sabina's obverse portrait with several different reverses.

The coins of Alexandria, and of Amisus in Pontus, provide illuminating examples of oscillating reverse types. As we have seen, Alexandria seems to have made an effort to create original reverses for its Sabina coinage only in the year of the imperial visit (130/131), when it placed the empress on the obverse of its billon tetradrachm issues. In subsequent years, Sabina occupied the obverse only of Alexandrian bronze half-drachms, and the corresponding reverses consist of recycled images.

In Pontus, Amisus offers on its Sabina reverses (exceptionally, all in silver) six different deities, male and female, Olympian and personified, all in the span of four years. The annual progression is Artemis and Hermes (134/135); then Hera and Artemis and Securitas (135/136); then Demeter (136/137), and in the final year (137/138) Aphrodite. The degree to which these choices aimed to evoke the empress's personal qualities is an open question. It is crucial to note that Hadrian's coinage at Amisus, which commenced in 131/132, shares most of these reverse types, year by year: Hermes in 134/135, Hera and Securitas in 135/136, Demeter in 136/137. That leaves Artemis and Aphrodite, who had never previously appeared on Amisus' imperial coinage, as possibly personal to Sabina.³⁰

Indeed, it is worth emphasizing that the divinities that appear on the reverses of the Sabina provincial issues are perfectly prominent also

on those of Hadrian. His provincial reverses feature many more male gods, and in greater frequency, than those of Sabina. Zeus, Dionysus, Asclepius, and Heracles (in that order) are the most popular choices for the minting cities, followed by Apollo, Hermes, Poseidon, Sarapis, and Ares. But his reverses present all the female deities that we find for Sabina. The Hadrian provincial coinage has much greater emphasis on Athena—by far the most commonly depicted goddess—and the Tyche of individual cities (as well as river gods and local heroes), but ample representation of the others in roughly the same order: Demeter and Artemis, then Cybele, followed by Aphrodite and Isis. The fact that there is so much overlap in subject matter between the provincial reverses of emperor and empress forces us to consider the limits of interpreting the Sabina issues.

For only a small fraction of the provincial reverses can we detect an effort to assimilate the empress Sabina's actual features to the divine figure or abstraction depicted. These images are found concentrated in just a few mints. First is that of Alexandria in Egypt, which in a highly distinctive series in billon clearly portrays Sabina as either Demeter or Eusebeia in 130/131, when she visited (indeed, wintered in) the city. Then two cities in Asia (Ilium, Sardis) assimilated a standing Sabina to goddesses who cannot be identified.³¹

Next are the various mints of Anatolia that issued silver cistophoric coins. These hold the most promise for interpretation, despite the limited number of examples that show Sabina. In Chapter 6 we discussed several types from early 128 (with Fortuna and Pietas reverses) that should specifically celebrate Sabina's naming as Augusta, and express hope for the couple's safe travel on the Third Journey.³²

Finally, we have the case of Cilicia, one of the areas that most favored the minting of Hadrian (head or bust)/Sabina (bust) types. We find them issued by Zephyrion, Pompeiopolis (Soli), Tarsus, Mopsus, Aegeae, and Epiphanea. Indeed, Tarsus, Mopsus and Aegeae chose—quite unusually—silver as the medium for these types. Several Cilician cities offered Sabina obverses paired with a miscellaneous image on the reverse—but generally eschewing portraits of Olympian divinities, so common elsewhere.

All the same, U. Hahn rightly observes that the coins that most strongly advertise an association between Sabina and Artemis are clustered in this province. Mopsus produced two Hadrian/Sabina silver issues, with the empress's bust resting on a crescent moon, a

quiver behind her shoulder—and so clearly marked as Artemis. Tarsus minted a couple of Hadrian/Sabina types, with a crescent resting on the empress's shoulders. So the fact that Cestrus pairs an obverse portrait of Sabina with a star and crescent on reverse should be seen also as an invocation of Artemis. Two coins of Seleucia may also be relevant here. They show facing busts of Apollo and Artemis on the obverse, and, on the reverse, Athena, who strikes down a giant serpent. One of these coins is dated to Hadrian's 20th year (i.e., 135/136). It has been suspected that the Apollo and Artemis are in fact disguised representations of emperor and empress (thus *RPC*).

Hahn reasonably takes such items as evidence that various cities of Cilicia—she singles out Tarsus and Seleucia—integrated the empress into their preexisting Artemis cults. If the Sabina/'Europa' type that Seleucia minted in fact is a representation of the bull-riding Artemis Tauropolos, that adds still another Artemis coin.³³

Much more can be said, and no doubt ought to be said. Yet a proper study of Sabina's provincial coinage would involve not just assembling every type from every minting authority, a task immensely difficult in itself—even with *Roman Provincial Coinage* III, since previously unknown coins come on the art market all the time. It would also mean examining the entire history of each of those mints to assess the originality and influence of the coins honoring this empress. I have not undertaken that study here. But even a cursory assessment suggests that many of the provincial Sabina reverses are traditional to a given city (or at the least tralatitane from a previous emperor's reign), or are shared with Hadrian. As such, in the vast majority of cases, they should have no special significance for illuminating Sabina's presence on the obverse.

Assimilation of Sabina to Specific Goddesses in the Eastern Inscriptions

In the dedicatory inscriptions and (especially) the coins of the Greek east, U. Hahn finds Sabina in her lifetime explicitly or implicitly assimilated to a range of goddesses whose cumulative total had not been reached since the earliest empire.³⁴ In the inscriptions, Sabina is formally addressed generically as *thea* ("goddess"), a title that, as we have noted,

does not extend to the coins; also Hera (not found for an imperial woman since Livia) or “New Hera” (previously attested for Livia and Domitia) or *Iuno Coniugalis* (unique); Demeter (not seen since Livia and Agrippina Minor) or “New Demeter” (last in the case of Livia); and Artemis (a first for an imperial woman), specifically in her guise as *Kelkaia*.

The coins do not bear dedicatory legends, and the reverse types (I have argued) often lack significance that is closely personal to the empress. But when we can detect actual syncretization at work, they strongly assimilate Sabina with two Olympian deities in particular, namely, Artemis (in Cilicia) and Demeter (in Alexandria). The cistophoric coinage of Asia presents Sabina as both Fortuna and Pietas. At Alexandria we also find Sabina personified as Eusebeia (= Pietas), and perhaps identified to a degree with Isis (not found on coinage of any city since Nero’s wife Poppaea Sabina). Hahn would also include on this list Euthenia (a personified goddess of fertility and plenty, associated with Demeter), but the evidence (from the Alexandrian coins) seems too slight and circumstantial.³⁵

The series of dated inscriptions from Ephesus (132/133, 134/135, and possibly 136/137, on which see Chapter 8) as well as a pair of dedications from Megara (from a series dated securely to the period late 135 to 137) show that divine-like honors continued to be generated for the empress even after the conclusion of the Third Journey. Inscribed altars to Sabina variously identify her as *thea* at Mytilene (shared with Hadrian as ‘Olympios’); “New Hera” at Thasos (also shared with Hadrian *Olympios*), and at Patara and Tlos in Lycia; and Artemis *Kelkaia* at Nicopolis.³⁶

Hahn notes a corresponding expansion of divine-like honors to Hadrian, an increase that helps explain the scale and variety of those for Sabina. As we might expect, the cities that had benefited conspicuously from Hadrian were more likely to be pronounced in their enthusiasm for Sabina. Hahn cites Megara as a clear example of a city that communicated its enthusiasm for the imperial cult by assimilating the ruling couple to the main gods of the city. Sometime in the years 135–137 its tribes honored Hadrian as “Pythian” (i.e., Apollo), and “queen (*basilissa*) Sabina Augusta” as “New Demeter.” The evident pains that the Cilician cities took on their coinage for Sabina provide another example. Yet not all cities deemed it a necessity that, to honor Hadrian, one also had to include mention of Sabina. We have noted entire swaths of the Greek east that minted for Hadrian but ignored his wife on the coinage.

The impetus to identify Sabina with specific goddesses seems to have come only with her naming as Augusta in 128. None of the inscriptions collected by Hahn that explicitly present Sabina as a manifestation of Hera, Demeter, or Artemis—which are the three principal identifications—lack the epithet *Sebaste*. It is a good working assumption that Hadrian’s official identification (after 128/129) as “Olympian” Zeus stimulated the notion of his wife as Hera or New Hera.

For Sabina’s assimilation to Hera, the evidence is almost exclusively epigraphic; the coins somewhat surprisingly offer little.³⁷ Inscriptions honoring Sabina as Demeter or “New Demeter” are not so numerous. For instance, there is nothing from Eleusis or Athens. This comes as a stunner, given the centrality of the Mysteries for Hadrian’s self-conception.³⁸ At first glance, the equation of the empress with Demeter seems reasonably common on her provincial coins. But only those of Alexandria can be shown expressly to assimilate the two, in precisely the year of the imperial visit (130/131).³⁹

As for Artemis, inscriptional evidence is limited to the multiple altars equating Sabina with Artemis *Kelkaia* at Nicopolis on Epirus, as discussed at some length in Chapter 8. Obverse portraits of Sabina paired with reverses showing Artemis as huntress are the most common type in the Greek cities’ coinage honoring the empress. (They are among the most popular for those honoring Hadrian, too.) Yet it seems the various established local cults of Artemis more than anything influenced the cities’ representation of the goddess on the reverses of its empress coins. Certainly these types seem merely traditional, without specific reference to supposed attributes of Sabina.⁴⁰ The inventive coin types of Cilicia show that they especially identified Sabina with the goddess, as Hahn argues. Yet (paradoxically) no Cilician city placed Artemis on the reverse of its Sabina obverses, unless Seleucia’s ‘Europa’ is in fact Artemis Tauropolos. The cities, as Hahn herself stresses, evidently had substantial discretion on how to represent the empress on their coins.⁴¹

Comparative Distribution of Sabina and Antinoös Coins

Starting in late 130 CE, mint masters in the eastern cities faced an additional, quite novel problem in their development of imperial types. The question: how does one coordinate Sabina coinage with numismatic

honors for Hadrian's beloved Antinoös? Significantly, the mint at Rome never produced a coin for Antinoös, and so provided no guidance in the matter.

As we have seen in Chapter 7, local Greek elites, responding (surely) to a centrally organized effort, took the lead by privately sponsoring large-format, non-monetary bronze Antinoös medallions in various cities, demonstrably not long after his death. We find these medals especially in Antinoös' native Bithynia—his birthplace, Bithynium, and also Nicomedia, Calchedon, Cius, and Tium—but also in Galatia (Ancyra), Ionia (Smyrna, perhaps Ephesus), Cyme (Aeolis), Tarsus and Aegeae (Cilicia), and Old Greece in Mantinea (the putative mother city of Bithynium) and Corinth. It is hard not to be impressed by the size and weight of these commemoratives, which routinely measure more than 40 mm in diameter and weigh more than 40 g. No regularly minted US coin has exceeded those two dimensions; by way of comparison, the famed "Double Eagle" \$20 gold coin struck from 1850 to 1933 had a diameter of 34 mm and a weight of 35 g. No one in the eastern provinces ever tried to match these splashy Antinoös types with medallions honoring Sabina.⁴²

Yet it evidently took a few years for the cities to consider integrating Antinoös into their individual monetary systems. Amisus in Pontus provides the earliest dated example, which is 133/134. The city had been minting silver drachms honoring Hadrian since 131/132, but as of yet had done nothing for Sabina. One can almost see the process of negotiation at work. For 133/134, Amisus continued with the Hadrian silver coinage, struck a large-format Antinoös bronze medal (deriving his portrait from a type recently issued at Smyrna), and issued an Antinoös bronze coin at the *assarion* value (i.e., one-tenth of a drachm, quite comparable in size and weight to a US ten-cent piece). For the next year and beyond, Amisus expanded its silver imperials at the drachm denomination with an ambitious series honoring also Sabina, and discontinued its Antinoös bronze commemoratives (both the medal and coin). Amisus was the only city in Anatolia to mint silver coins that feature Sabina on the obverse.⁴³

Alexandria introduced Antinoös to its currency a year later than Amisus, in 134/135, but continued its sequence of Antinoös coins through 136/137. That city too created a hierarchy of types based on metals and denominations. We have seen that in that same period Alexandria each year issued Sabina/Hadrian types, almost always on billon tetradrachms. Once the city had inaugurated its Antinoös coinage, it restricted his portraits entirely to bronze, in denominations that

ranged from the drachm (134/135 through 136/137), to half-drachm and also one-third-drachm, or diobol (134/135 and 136/137). So it was clear that the Hadrian/Sabina types held the primary value, and those of Antinoös represented fractions.

Yet the Alexandrians also problematized the relationship between the living empress and the deceased youth, at least for us. As noted, Sabina appears on the obverse of dated Alexandrian bronze coins from 131/132 through 135/136. And the denomination the city selected in that instance was a bronze half-drachm. So the city was contemporaneously minting Antinoös coins both at the same as and at a higher denomination than the solo Sabina. The empress then disappeared from the Alexandrian bronze coinage a year before Antinoös did.⁴⁴

Balancing public honors for Hadrian, Sabina, and Antinoös was obviously no easy matter. Not many other Greek cities took the plunge and tried simultaneously to honor Sabina and Antinoös on their actual coinage. Other than Amisus and Alexandria, which sorted out the basic hierarchical problems by using different metals, we find just seven other polities tackling this challenge. All of these cities minted exclusively in bronze. It is interesting to find them employing five different solutions. Mallus in Cilicia simply assigned Sabina to a higher denomination than Antinoös; Mytilene on Lesbos appears to have done the same. Sardis in Lydia coined for the two in three denominations, with Sabina appearing at each level and Antinoös sharing the lowest fraction. In Achaëa, Argos minted Sabina and Antinoös coins at the same measure and weight. Hadrianotherae in Mysia had large medals for Antinoös, and coins in two denominations, with Antinoös featured on both and Sabina on just the lower value. Finally, Tmolus in Lydia minted a coin series in three denominations, depicting Antinoös at the highest value, Hadrian and Aelius Caesar on the middle issue, and Sabina on the lowest (worth half the Antinoös coin). Nearby Sala had a similar but less marked scheme, in two denominations, with Antinoös at the higher value and Sabina at the lower. Significantly, no city tried to associate Antinoös with either Hadrian or Sabina on the same medal or coin.⁴⁵

Development of Sabina's Portraiture on the Coins

The provincial coins that actually carry dates provide welcome help for making sense of developments in minting for Sabina at Rome. They

also dispel the notion that one can reconstruct for Sabina a simple “historical” sequence of hairstyles and so arrange the coins on that basis. It is R. Abdy who offers the most sensitive understanding of Sabina’s hair fashions. He makes much of two emphatic changes in her hairstyle that occur on dated provincial issues, one at Alexandria and another a few years later at Amisus, each with chronological implications for the coinage at the central Rome mint.

First, Alexandria. “Following the precedent set at Rome,” Abdy explains, “Sabina’s bust appears on the local coinage [of Alexandria] beginning AD 128 with the expected early hairstyle,” i.e., that of Matidia, with braid piled on top of head. “Then during AD 130/131 and 131/132—around the time of the imperial visit—she is transformed into the goddesses Demeter (= Ceres) and Eusebeia (= Pietas). These busts show her with hair loose and flowing down to the shoulders, crowned with a poppy.”⁴⁶ Of course, the reverses prompt these identifications, those of 130/131 showing alternately the empress seated with grain ears and scepter (as Ceres), or standing with scepter while sacrificing at an altar (as Pietas). As for the poppy, we shall have more to say about that in a moment.

Indeed, on the coins of Alexandria for 130/131 and (especially) 131/132, Sabina is portrayed within the same year—sometimes on the same issue—with two quite distinct hairstyles, which R. M. Nicolai interprets as purposefully referencing both her mother, Matidia I, and her (adoptive) mother-in-law, Plotina.⁴⁷ So Abdy must be correct in his point that the flowing hairstyle seems inspired precisely by the visit to Egypt. That style then predominates on the rest of Sabina’s lifetime coin issues, both in Rome and in the provinces. Oddly, when Sabina departs from Egypt, so does this mode of representation at Alexandria: the “Matidian” hairstyle already makes a comeback on some coin types by 131/132, and then persists, for reasons Abdy can only guess.

Next, Amisus in Pontus, where there is a four-year sequence of Sabina obverses in silver. This city portrays the empress with the “Matidian” hairstyle in the first two of those years (133/134 and 134/135), and the loose “queue” style throughout the whole series.⁴⁸ But the year 135/136 offers a surprise: a second “hair-up” style, which simplifies the “Matidian” arrangement. The coil of hair is now unbraided, and a lick of hair, which in the older style left a fringe in front of the ear, is now brushed back behind the ear.

The first to recognize this second “hair-up” fashion was B. Adembri, who saw it as an evocation of idealizing hairstyles of especially

Aphrodite and Artemis in fourth-century BCE statuary. Abdy leverages this second hair-up style to determine the chronology of Sabina's types at Rome. For this 'Aphrodite' style appears on numismatic portraits with the (demonstrably late) obverse legend SABINA AVGVSTA. Die analysis suggests its use at the Rome mint was limited, and soon gave way to the main "queue" style.⁴⁹ But still we gain a cluster of types that can comfortably be assigned to a reasonably tight period late in Sabina's lifetime.

It does seem then that for the years 128–138 we can reconstruct the basic structure of types for Sabina's coinage at Rome, with reasonably close dating, especially at the beginning of that decade, for a cluster of issues in the years ca. 134–136 after the conclusion of the great Third Journey, and after her death and consecration. R. Abdy identifies seven distinct hairstyles for Sabina on the Rome coins: five from her lifetime (i–v), and three following her consecration (v–vii), including one that is common to both life and death.

Now, the nature of the evidence hardly admits precision. Some of Abdy's groups and subgroups are in fact tiny in terms of individual types. And classification can be slippery. Still, a crucial fact presents itself—seen already in the dated provincial issues—which is that the changes in Sabina's hair fashion at Rome are not exactly sequential. For example, the braided, piled-up "Matidian" hairstyle (i) keeps popping up on the Rome coins throughout Sabina's lifetime.⁵⁰ Granted, it does seem clear that this hairstyle is the exclusive fashion shown in the earliest *Augusta* coins. Yet it remained in use throughout most of the series as a default or (as Abdy calls it) "reserve."

We can go a bit further. Abdy's "Matidian" (i) and the loose-haired (ii) hairstyle variants may well reflect an actual transition during the years ca. 128–130/131. The laureate plus queue hairstyle (iii) found as a variant on seven bronze types appears to date to the years ca. 130/131–135, but it does not receive great prominence on the Rome coins. Rather, it is the diadem plus queue (iv) that dominates in the years ca. 130/131–137. But the second "hair-up" style, now unbraided (v), punctuates that series around the year 135. It seems that this hairstyle was supposed to attract notice. It appears on all denominations except the *quinarii*.

Interestingly, the last of the lifetime subgroups—with simplified SABINA AVGVSTA legend, assigned to ca. 135–137—features a reprise of all the above hairstyles except for the (apparently short-lived and transitional) laureate plus queue (iii). The sobering lesson from these

coins is that, in isolation, the presence of one hairstyle or another on a portrait of Sabina gives scant support for positing an absolute date.

*Comparison of the Coins with Portraiture
in Sculpture and Other Media*

How was Sabina's public image communicated through sculpture in the period of the Third Journey and beyond? Here we should be able to trace at least the general lines of development, for the evidence is plentiful. About three-quarters of the 60 or so probable or possible representations have been assigned—admittedly, sometimes in the face of strong dissent on the basic question of identification—to the years 128–137. In other words, we have much material to discuss in regard to the empress's official *Augusta* portraiture.

Within the *Augusta* group, the variety of portrait types is startling. Only a modest percentage of the sculptures cluster into what seem to be closely related renderings. Most consequentially, there is a strongly idealizing bust (Figure 16), found in the Lanuvium villa of Antoninus Pius, which is the prototype (or closely related to the prototype) reflected in about a dozen other portraits.⁵¹ This is the best evidence we have of mass production of the empress's image in this medium. A. Carandini dates this type to Sabina's later lifetime ("ca. 134–ca. 137"), which is almost certainly correct. Naturally, a good number of the remaining items in our select corpus offer affinities in discrete respects to various other objects in the group, especially in regard to hairstyle.⁵² But the overwhelming impression conveyed is that the regime offered a steady stream of ever-changing sculptural images of the empress. An intriguing aspect of these sculptures is that they have only occasional contact with what we see on the numismatic portraits of the empress, which offer a clear if complicated progression of hairstyles in the decade starting with 128.⁵³

That said, the portraits of Sabina clearly changed over time. The evidence is overwhelming that both the coin issues and sculptures at first emphasized physical similarities with her grandmother Marciana and mother, Matidia I, as well as her adoptive mother-in-law, Plotina. The return to Rome after the Third Journey (128–early 133) clearly sparked a transition. From this point, portrait artists often abandoned naturalism and sought to picture the middle-aged empress as a young serene beauty, in her lifetime and after consecration.



FIGURE 16. Rome (Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Massimo, inv. 629, found near Vittorio Emanuele II monument), portrait bust of Sabina (?ca. 134–137 CE).

Credit: Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme

Now, A. Carandini proposes a series of nine major chronological phases for the iconography of Sabina. (For the first of these—the period from her birth through marriage ca. 100—he has no example to offer.) For the purposes of our study, the simpler schemes of R. Abdy (for the coins) and B. Adembri (for the coins and sculptures) suffice. Put roughly, here the emphasis shifts from Sabina as a continuator of the Trajanic dynasty to something approaching an abstraction, finally culminating in her creation with consecration as a newly acclaimed goddess.

Adembri strongly argues that the return to Rome marks a “decisive change in the image of Sabina.” For the coins, Adembri finds Sabina portrayed with loose allusions to the hairstyle of Plotina, but also with that idealizing hairstyle modeled on fourth-century BCE representations of Aphrodite and Artemis. She sees this latter typology reflected

particularly in sculptures from Gabii (now in the Louvre) and Otricoli (now in the Vatican collection).⁵⁴

One notes that Ceres, so conspicuous on the reverses of Sabina's earlier coinage at Rome, practically fades from view in the later issues of the central mint after the couple's return to the city. The provincial coins that bear dates confirm this development, to a degree.⁵⁵ Yet Adembri observes that evocations of the goddess Ceres (or possibly Persephone) remain pronounced in the empress's contemporary sculptural portraiture, which communicates the imperial couple's continued devotion to the cult of Eleusis. Indeed, for Adembri, the Sabina sculptures of the later-lifetime era greatly outstrip the coins in offering a range of variants for an idealized and strongly "Hellenized" image of the empress. Adembri does not offer a list, though the images must include at a minimum the bust that was found at Lanuvium and its many copies. She argues that this proliferation of statue types served not just to promote the aesthetic tastes and values of Hadrian. It also amplified the Panhellenic aspects of Hadrian's political program, stressing continuity of his regime with the most splendid attributes of the classical past. Evidently, the emperor had consolidated his power to an extent that removed the need to advertise so emphatically through his wife specifically the legitimacy of his descent from Trajan.⁵⁶

Sabina's Hair Knot

Some of the statuary of Sabina's final years features an additional element in the hairstyle, with hair gathered in what Adembri describes as "a voluminous knot above the forehead," resembling a large central ornament on a diadem. This feature can be seen already in some of the apparent lifetime portraits in the round.⁵⁷ The knot also seems to recur—in profile—on dated coins of Gaba (Palaestina) of 133/134 and of Amisus of 134/135, and on one of the posthumous CONSECRATIO coin issues from Rome. Carandini attributes to "ca. 132–134" the one sculpture from this group that he discusses, a head from the Villa Hadriana now in the Museo Nazionale. Indeed, this evidence, taken together with the pronounced tendency toward abstraction and idealization in the facial features of the relevant portraits, cumulatively points toward a late date for the topknot in front.⁵⁸

Can we recover the significance of this hair knot? B. Adembri identifies it as a Hercules knot—i.e., square knot—which in antiquity had apotropaic significance. This knot first emerged as a symbol in Old Kingdom Egypt, where it long represented the unity of Upper Egypt to the south and Lower Egypt to the north. Alexander the Great in the later fourth century BCE adapted the Hercules-knot motif as a sign of divine kinship and favor. However, in the classical period the square knot is also frequently represented as adorning the belt or girdle of young women (and possibly brides), as well as maiden goddesses. As such, it seems to have become an attribute of the Vestal Virgins in Rome. In sculptural hairstyles, it is chiefly Apollo and Aphrodite who sport a Hercules knot. For the long-haired Apollo, it seems to underline the god's role as protector of young men during their transition from ephebe to full maturity. For Aphrodite, it is similarly connected with the protection of youths in transition, in this case of young girls and women in their passage to the state of brides.⁵⁹

All this history goes to suggest that the appearance of the Hercules-knot hairstyle in certain later lifetime and posthumous portraits of Sabina was meant to connote at a minimum youthfulness and marital virtue, if not actual beneficent power. It is also just possible that the Egyptian background to the Hercules knot—as a symbol of a unified Egypt—may be relevant here. One notes that one of the two generally accepted sculptural representations of Cleopatra VII (born 69 BCE, and queen of Egypt until her death in 30 BCE), now in the Vatican Museums, shows her with a broad diadem surmounted by a small bun of hair centered at front. Perhaps this feature was meant to suggest the *uraeus*, the cobra on headgear displayed above the forehead that functioned as the traditional symbol of royal power in Egypt for both kings and queens.⁶⁰ Sabina, who in her lifetime was explicitly deemed queen of Upper and Lower Egypt—as the hieroglyphic text of the Antinoös obelisk on the Pincian hill shows—had a claim to leverage the symbolism had she wanted. Indeed, the “poppy” that R. Abdy notes at the top of the forehead on Sabina's “hair down” Alexandrian portrait coins may rather be a small hair knot, hard to identify as such, since it is depicted in profile.⁶¹

There is also a strong Augustan resonance, as B. Adembri also notes. In Rome during the Triumviral period (44–31 BCE) the ‘nodus’ (Latin “knot”) hairstyle, featuring a small knot above the forehead, enjoyed wide popularity. It seems to have been Octavia herself, sister

of the future emperor, who introduced it ca. 40 BCE. But portraits of women of the emperor Augustus' household show them continuing to wear their hair in that style into the next generation. The emperor's wife Livia adopted it by 17 BCE, and afterward it is common in her portraiture. D. E. E. Kleiner goes so far to suggest that Cleopatra's *uraeus* in fact inspired the *nodus* style at Rome. It was the Augustan women and their hairdressers, she argues, who appropriated it and transformed this knot into a symbol of Roman womanhood and national pride.⁶²

In light of this rich nexus of associations, we have every reason to suspect that the introduction of that hair knot into the later iconography of Sabina was meant to go far beyond mere ornament. It was a multivalent symbol, chosen to enhance still further the charisma of the empress, in both life and death. And it is to her death that we now must turn.

Sabina's Death and Deification

Hadrian and Sabina on Relief Sculptures from the Arco di Portogallo in Rome

Let us race forward (briefly) to Rome of the 17th century, specifically the reign of Pope Alexander VII Chigi (1655–1667). In August 1662, as part of a far-reaching program of urban interventions and building in Rome, the Pope ordered the demolition of the so-called Arco di Portogallo (Arch of Portugal) (Figure 17). This was an imperial-era single arch, its span originally flanked on either side by two columns, at least on its northern side. It was situated just north of Piazza Colonna, where Chigi had just recently acquired a grand palace. The arch straddled—indeed, bottlenecked—the Via del Corso at the intersection of today's Via della Vite; the ambassador of Portugal resided nearby (in the Palazzo Fiano), thus giving rise to its name. It is uncertain when the arch was built and what it was meant to commemorate. Scholars have suggested a range of possibilities for the date, starting with the age of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, through that of Aurelian (reigned 270–275), and extending to the late-antique period. Some have even considered it simply a medieval pastiche.

What seems certain from period drawings of the arch and also the demolition report is that its construction repurposed earlier elements. Those included two large historical reliefs of Hadrianic or Antonine date that adorned the northern face—of the same material, precisely the same size, and of similar style. One was set between each pair of columns. The Palazzo dei Conservatori on the Campidoglio (now the Capitoline Museums) received the sculptural reliefs, where they can still be seen today; the other components of the arch were sold.¹



FIGURE 17. Arco di Portogallo. From Filippo de' Rossi, *Descrizione di Roma Antica*. Rome, Rossi: 1697, p. 293.

Credit: Google Books

Each of the two relief panels has seen significant restoration (especially in the later 17th century), but there is general agreement that Hadrian features in both. The one that was placed on the eastern flank of the arch pictures a scene of an imperial *adlocutio* (speech or proclamation) in a crowded composition, with much early-modern reworking. The setting is clearly the city of Rome, and perhaps the Forum. In the audience of the *adlocutio*, the prominence of a boy in commoner's shoes (whether he is generic, symbolic, or historical) seems key to divining the

occasion (again, real or symbolic) here depicted. The presence of a child in an *adlocutio* scene seems unparalleled in the Roman historical reliefs.

The scene depicted on the companion panel (Figure 18), from the western flank of the arch, is not in serious dispute. In the top half of the



FIGURE 18. Rome (Palazzo dei Conservatori, Musei Capitolini, inv. MC1213): The Apotheosis of Sabina. Panel from the Arco di Portogallo (138 CE). Credit: Carole Raddato/Creative Commons, with permission of Direzione dei Musei Capitolini

frame it shows the apotheosis of an empress. The focal point, however, is the emperor seated on a low draped chair at lower right-hand corner, with right arm and hand gesturing upward. He was originally bearded, though modern interventions have clouded the original disposition of his hands, and added elements to his face, head, and toga. A fully draped man stands behind the right shoulder of the emperor, his face, head, and hair almost completely new. To the left of the emperor, occupying the lower left-hand corner, is a figure with nude torso, with new right forearm and hand. He reclines on the ground, leaning on his left elbow, his back toward the viewer. He looks not up at the apotheosis scene, but to his right at the emperor, either awaiting or reacting to his response. This pose provides a moment of strong dramatic tension.

And the apotheosis itself? Rising above a burning masonry pyre (either heavily reworked or completely modern), a veiled and draped empress, shown in full figure, rides “side saddle” on the back of a winged female Genius (badly damaged and extensively repaired). The Genius holds a long torch in both hands, and flies upward toward the upper right of the frame. But she turns her head back toward the empress, who for her part gazes forward. The cheering news for our sculpture is that the head of the empress, except for the nose, is wholly original. “The hair is waved back from the forehead,” observed A. J. B. Wace, “and fastened in a knot on the crown, and in front of the forehead is placed the *stephane*.” The bearded emperor clinches the identification of the empress. She is Sabina.

So this apotheosis scene shows five figures in all, but at four different scales. Hadrian and the reclining half-nude figure are the largest; indeed, the sense one gets is that if the emperor were to rise from his chair, his head would bump against the top of the frame. The man standing behind the emperor is shown at about three-quarters his size, and the Genius at a bit less than two-thirds. The empress is still smaller than the Genius she rides, and perhaps half the size of the emperor.²

*More Evidence from Roman Historical Reliefs on
the Consecration of an Empress*

As it happens, there is another, not much later relief that shows the apotheosis of an empress. It is found on a massive pedestal that was unearthed in Rome in 1703, just a few meters west of Piazza Colonna, at

the foot of a slope known as Monte Citorio. The pedestal (as its dedicatory inscription tells us) once supported a column that the co-emperors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus set up in memory of their divinized adoptive father, Antoninus Pius. Three of the sides of the pedestal, which is now in the Belvedere Courtyard in the Vatican Museums, are covered with reliefs. The principal (south) scene, located on the opposite face of the base from that of the inscription, shows the apotheoses of Faustina I and Antoninus Pius, who died and were deified in October 140 and March 161, respectively.

The two side panels are nearly but not completely identical. They each depict a peculiar attribute of imperial funerals, maneuvers on horseback (the *decursio equestris*) in honor of the deceased. Specifically, a group of 17 horsemen (as L. Vogel has shown, consisting of one of the two reigning Augusti, six young senators known as the *seviri equestris*, and ten *equites*, i.e., the non-senatorial wing of the Roman ruling class) gallop counterclockwise around two groups of five praetorian infantrymen, each including an officer and standard bearer. Though no actual pyre is represented, this scene should refer to the roles of equestrians and military at the separate consecrations of empress and emperor. The fact that the co-emperors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus are jointly making this dedication may explain the (highly unusual) repetition of scenes, in which each one features alone.

Fortunately, we have two accounts from Dio Cassius to provide context for these compositions. Dio describes how, already in 29 CE at the funeral of Julia Augusta (= Livia) in the Campus Martius, priests, equestrians, and the infantry in turn circumambulated the empress's pyre before it was lit. For his own day, Dio (or rather his epitomator) offers a detailed eyewitness account of how in 193 Septimius Severus on his accession conducted the funeral of Pertinax, the penultimate emperor. First, we are told, there was a ceremonial sequence in the Forum that culminated in the emperor's eulogy for the deceased, punctuated by acclamations from the elite audience.

There followed a formal procession with bier to the Campus Martius, where a towering pyre stood three stories tall, adorned with precious decorations in gold, silver, and ivory (and at the top, Pertinax's gilded chariot). The senators took seats on temporary bleachers to witness the coming spectacle in comfort and safety; the emperor ascended a tribunal. "The magistrates and the equestrian order . . . and likewise the cavalry and the infantry," we are told, "passed in and out around the

pyre performing intricate evolutions, both those of peace and those of war.” This ceremony was the final preliminary to the actual consecration. “Then at last the consuls applied fire to the structure, and when this had been done, an eagle flew aloft from it. Thus was Pertinax made immortal.” The scenes of horsemen and infantry here on the Antonine pedestal must refer to the last groups to circle the pyre before it was set alight.³

The basic composition of the apotheosis relief on the Antonine pedestal is formally quite similar to the Sabina panel. Here we find a helmeted female figure seated in the lower right-hand corner—in this case clearly marked as Roma, whom Hadrian had promoted from personification to goddess. To her left reclines a half-nude male, balancing on his lap a small stylized obelisk topped by a ball, and gazing upward. The obelisk must represent the gnomon of the famous meridian that Augustus set up in the Campus Martius. That in turn identifies the reclining figure here and also in the Sabina relief as a personification of the Campus, where imperial cremations took place. Significantly, there is no altar or pyre depicted on the Antonine panel. Rather, a winged nude male Genius seems to be taking flight from the obelisk, his foot springing from its shaft. The emperor and veiled empress, each clutching scepters, are poised closely together on his back as he ascends to the right. An eagle—the bird of Jupiter and the symbol par excellence of imperial apotheosis—flies above each of the Genius’s wings, to the left and right of emperor and empress. The five figures are shown at two scales, with the imperial couple depicted at about two-thirds the size of the other three figures.⁴

One important difference between the pair of Conservatori panels (i.e., the *adlocutio* scene and Sabina apotheosis) and Antonine reliefs is that we know the original context only for the latter. Vogel argues that the Conservatori reliefs “were probably originally installed as recessed panels in an architectural context”—perhaps an arch—“and were meant to be seen by an observer standing considerably below.” Whether this monument was created late in Hadrian’s reign or early in that of Antoninus Pius, and whatever form it took—the case has also been made for an altar—what is certain is that the Sabina relief “pre-dated the scene of the apotheosis of Antoninus Pius, and is its direct precedent.”⁵

Vogel here also raises an important methodological point. We do not know how extensive was the set of reliefs to which the Hadrianic

panels belonged. We cannot tell whether or not the *adlocutio* scene as such is to be taken as representing another aspect of the same historical event, namely, the consecration of Sabina. Many have supposed that Hadrian is portrayed as delivering a eulogy for his wife, or publicly reading the Senate's decree of her divinization. Either interpretation seems possible. But a close thematic connection between the two Hadrian reliefs is not a given, especially if their original series consisted of more than three or four panels.⁶

One shared attribute of the Sabina and Antonine reliefs is that they portray an acclaiming figure at lower right, serving as witness to the apotheosis above. Another is that they show the deified figures in smaller scale. "The apotheosis of the *divus* or *diva* is ostensibly the celebrated event," explains Vogel, "but the actual emphasis tends to be on another personage who perhaps commissioned the monument." Still, Vogel finds plenty of dynamism in our panel. "The apotheosis of Sabina was represented essentially as the narrative of an extremely important event." The Antonine pedestal, on the other hand, conflates two events a full two decades apart. Perhaps since no narrative readily presented itself, it borrows from the Sabina relief but privileges an ideological message, a chief component of which is the *pietas* of the co-emperors who set up this monument to their adoptive parents.⁷

So it seems that at least one of the two historical reliefs of the Arco di Portogallo provides some genuinely usable history. Four solid facts emerge from the Sabina panel: Hadrian outlived his wife (indeed, the visual focus here is on the emperor, not the empress); her funeral took place somewhere in the Campus Martius; she received divine honors; and the emperor upon his wife's cremation publicly swore to her apotheosis. The figure of the man standing behind the emperor (pictured at three-quarters) may suggest a further data point: at the time of Sabina's funeral, one of Hadrian's appointed successors—L. Aelius Caesar (died 1 January 138) or Antoninus (formally adopted 25 February 138)—at least theoretically could be present. It is a pity that the other Portogallo panel, that of Hadrian's address to civilians at Rome, offers too many uncertainties to be pressed into service for elucidating the events surrounding Sabina's last rites.

But the Antonine pedestal surely helps here. Its main panel implies that just a few years after the death of Sabina, in the year 140, Antoninus Pius' wife, Faustina I, was cremated and apotheosized also on the Campus Martius, as was the emperor himself two decades later.

Its side panels also reveal what we might in any case expect, that the emperor and empress received the full traditional honors of an imperial funeral. We are entitled to take it for granted that Sabina received the same level of honors, as evidently had her grandmother Marciana, her mother, Matidia, and her husband's adoptive mother, Plotina, before her. In this Sabina was elevated above Hadrian's first choice as heir, L. Aelius Caesar. The *Historia Augusta* notes that a full imperial funeral followed after his death (on 1 January 138), but his honors fell short of divinization.⁸

The Death of Sabina

Of course, we are getting ahead of ourselves here. There is the question when (and for that matter, how) Sabina died. First, the date. Sabina died probably in the latter part of the year 137. She certainly saw the elevation of L. Aelius to Caesar (sometime after 19 June 136), for a coin of Parium (apparently) and a set of coins from Tmolus show the two of them together. In Africa Proconsularis, the town of Avitta Bibba (southwest of Carthage, which became a *municipium* during Hadrian's reign) honored Hadrian, L. Aelius Caesar, and Sabina Augusta in an inscription dated precisely to "year twenty-one" of the emperor's tribunician power, which ran (surely) from 10 December 136 to 9 December 137. From that same province, a closely related pair of inscriptions from Mactar separately honors Sabina Augusta and Aelius Caesar; his stone bears the same tribunician year.

Two communities minted coins for Sabina that bore the date 137/138, and so evidently thought she was still alive in that span: Epiphanea in Cilicia, and Amisus in Pontus. Amisus struck a Sabina obverse in year 169 of its era, which must extend no earlier than February/March 137 to that same point in 138, for its other coins from that year show variously Hadrian, Aelius Caesar, and Antoninus Pius as Caesar.

No inscription or coin associates the living empress with Hadrian's second choice as successor, Antoninus. In all likelihood, she did not live to see his designation and adoption in January and February 138. If the figure of Hadrian's successor on the Portogallo apotheosis relief can be taken as Aelius Caesar (a theory that seems likely but not certain), the cumulative evidence points to the empress's death and deification in December 137.⁹

The biography of Hadrian in the *Historia Augusta* implies a different chronology. After return from his travels, we are told, the emperor fell ill and only then started thinking about a successor. His first thought was his brother-in-law, the aged L. Iulius Ursus Servianus. But Hadrian forced Servianus to commit suicide—the author provides a cross-reference to his earlier statement on this matter, that Hadrian did so to prevent the man, then aged 90, from surviving him—and also put to death Servianus’ grandson (and his own grandnephew), Pedanius Fuscus, suspecting him of imperial ambitions.

This incident leads to an aside on Hadrian’s hatreds, of his former friend A. Platorius Nepos (*cos.* 119 and then governor of Britain), of the popular senator D. Terentius Gentianus (*cos. suff.* 116, who evidently died before 130), and (paradoxically) of everyone he thought worthy to succeed him. However, the biographer continues, Hadrian repressed his natural cruelty until he almost died of a hemorrhage at his Villa at Tivoli. It was then that he forced Servianus to commit suicide (a list of the man’s imperial pretensions is offered in explanation), “and he put many others to death, either openly or through treachery.” Just one example is offered: “since his wife Sabina died not without the rumor of poison given to her by Hadrian.” Then follows notice of Hadrian’s decision to adopt L. Ceionius Commodus as L. Aelius Caesar.¹⁰

The *Historia Augusta*’s narrative sequence is entirely misleading. As we have seen in Chapter 5, Hadrian’s grandnephew Pedanius Fuscus and his grandfather Servianus met their deaths only after Commodus’ adoption—and indeed, in all probability, after his death and the announcement of Antoninus’ adoption in late January 138. Sabina certainly lived to see much if not most of Aelius’ tenure as Caesar. And she may well have died before the Pedanius affair.

One other source mentions the death of Sabina. The (anonymous) *Epitome de Caesaribus* devotes the first half of its Hadrian section to his family background, his education, and his positive personal attributes, including in the military sphere. It then turns to his deeply contradictory nature and fierce intellectual competitiveness. Next comes a startling pair of sentences. “His wife Sabina, while she was laboring under affronts almost appropriate for a slave, was compelled to commit suicide. She used to boast openly, because she had ascertained his nature was monstrous, that she had taken pains not to become pregnant by him, which would be to the hazard of the human race.” A description of Hadrian’s growingly painful (and ultimately mortal)

illness follows, which we are told prompted him to kill many from the Senate. After a short digression on his pacific foreign policy and administrative reforms, the *Epitome* states that Hadrian's illness caused him frequently to beg his most loyal servants to kill him, and indeed, he had to be prevented from committing suicide, before he died at age 62.¹¹

"Not surprisingly," notes A. R. Birley on these reports, "given that their relations had been known to have been bad for years, Hadrian was rumored to have poisoned [Sabina]." It of course is a commonplace of the ancient sources that members of the Roman imperial family poisoned one another. We see the charge attached to the reigns of the Julio-Claudians (all of them), Vitellius, the Flavians, and, later, Commodus, Caracalla, and Elagabalus, and then down through Julian, who was alleged to have killed his wife, Helena, by poison in the year 360. Emperors even accused other emperors. Hadrian, we are told, implicated Titus in the death of his father, Vespasian, by retailing a story of poisoning at a banquet. But the timing of Sabina's death has invited speculation. The literary sources emphasize for Hadrian's last years the interconnected themes of intensifying illness and rampant cruelty, against the background of a succession crisis. So it has been argued that Sabina supported (or was thought to have supported) the ambitions of Pedanius Fuscus, or opposed the adoption of Antoninus in early 138, and so for political reasons had to die.¹²

What do we actually know? The epitome of Dio is the most detailed on Hadrian's illness: a serious hemorrhage in 136, which prompts the decision to appoint Ceionius Commodus as heir, and steadily worsening health, with a second major hemorrhage and complications (resembling tuberculosis and severe edema, with depression) in early 138. Hadrian's recourse to magic, we are informed, proved ineffectual against the swelling; for instance, the emperor announced from a bed his choice of Antoninus as heir. In this narrative, dreams of immortality are turned on their head. Hadrian wanted to die but could not do so. The Dio epitome describes the ailing emperor's attempts to get the means to commit suicide or have someone run him through with a sword; his doctor is said to have advised him on the best place for the blade to enter. However, Hadrian could not get anyone to obey his orders. That basic picture may be accurate. In what must almost certainly be the preface to his *Autobiography* (preserved for us quite by chance, thanks to a papyrus find), Hadrian addresses Antoninus

with a resigned meditation on his mortality and an allusion to his suicidality.

Hadrian's last days found him at Baiae. The Dio narrative says it was deliberate departure from his regimen that finally killed him, in the presence of Antoninus, on 10 July 138. What we read in the *Historia Augusta* broadly corresponds to Dio, with significant expansion on various premonitions of the emperor's death (for some of which Marius Maximus is cited as a source) and on attempted self-treatments of his illness. The Hadrian biography also offers a poem—widely accepted as genuine—that Hadrian composed on his deathbed, addressing his soul as it flitted away to the ghastly locales of the afterlife, where it would trade jests no more. The astrologer Antigonos of Nicaea gives the most precise cause of death: shortness of breath caused by edema.¹³

It is this protracted and painful illness that is explicitly said to explain Hadrian's final cruelties, expressly directed toward the Senate. The emperor was not bloodthirsty by nature, claims the Dio epitome. But at the time of his death, "he was hated by the People, though in other respects his rule over them was excellent, for his first and last murders, since they were unjust and impious"—an obvious projection of the senatorial point of view onto the mass of Romans. The *Historia Augusta* says bluntly Hadrian was "hated by all."

Dio's "first murders" must refer to the affair of the four consulars, in 118, which Hadrian felt compelled to discuss and explain away in his *Autobiography*. But what precisely were the "last murders"? Leaving aside Sabina, our sources explicitly assign to the final phase of the reign only two actual names of victims: Pedanius Fuscus and Servianus. However, the *Historia Augusta* offers a miscellaneous list of Hadrian's persecutions, which includes at least one late adversary (Catilius Severus, removed as city prefect in 138) and so perhaps contains more not so readily dated. There was also a tradition that Hadrian after his adoption of Antoninus ordered a massacre of the Senate, which his heir forestalled (an action that is said to have earned him the name Pius). Aurelius Victor states that Hadrian actually carried it out. The general sense one gets is that Hadrian's last months had a reputation for unrestrained viciousness.¹⁴

There are several options regarding what happened in the case of Sabina's death (the facts of which are admittedly irrecoverable) and rapid consecration (which is certain). The first is that Sabina died a natural death, from a malady that was unconnected to Hadrian, or caught from

him by contagion. It is also possible that her demise was an accidental one, caused by what we might call a medical mistake. The *Historia Augusta* life of Aelius Caesar says that Hadrian's initial heir died in this manner, ingesting a potion that he believed would help him. Hadrian is said in his final words to have blamed his own death on doctors. The sole direct quotation that our literary sources give Sabina on any subject is in the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, in which she evidently boasts of her use of contraceptives or abortifacients. The ancient versions of those preventative measures could be deadly.¹⁵ The third possibility is that we should take our sources at their word, and that Hadrian deliberately put his wife out of the way by forced suicide or outright murder. The story of the execution of Pedanius Fuscus and the fate of the aged Servianus show that Hadrian could inflict his wrath on his own relatives if they clouded his succession plans.

It seems quite unlikely that Sabina was personally involved in the designs of Pedanius Fuscus (or others) on the throne, or stood in open opposition to the adoption of Antoninus Pius. For one thing, the chronology is difficult, for we have no good indication that she lived into the year 138. The fact of her divinization also tells against it. The family of Pedanius Fuscus, on the other hand, is said to have been severely punished.

But it does not seem that we can absolutely rule out the ailing Hadrian causing the death of his wife. Put in stark terms, it was very much to Hadrian's advantage for Sabina to predecease him. The circumstances of the fate of Antinoös in 130 come to mind. His drowning in the Nile in the company of the emperor aroused much discussion in antiquity, and for good reason. Even we have to wonder how Hadrian would have integrated the youth into court life on his eventual return to the city. (One thinks back to the future emperor Titus in the mid-70s CE, and the severe perception problem he had with keeping even the Jewish princess Julia Berenice in Rome, in the eyes of both Senate and People.) As matters turned out, Hadrian was able to exploit the dead Antinoös to enhance the charismatic aspects of his reign, especially for his eastern subjects but also in Italy (indeed, in Latium) itself. Surely the establishment of a cult for Antinoös, a mere companion of the emperor, created the strong presumption that Sabina and especially Hadrian would later receive their own divine honors.

There are also some frankly disquieting signs that the regime, not long after the couple's return to Rome from the Third Journey, started laying the groundwork for the empress's death and apotheosis. Most suggestive is

the final “reprise” phase of her lifetime coinage at Rome, in which contemporaneous types show the empress modeling four of her five numismatic hairstyles. Added to that is the general push of Sabina into extreme classical abstraction in the sculpture, and her wholesale disappearance (after 135/136) from the money of Alexandria, while that of Antinoös continued.

When Hadrian descended into his slowly ravaging final illness, Sabina was then in her early 50s. The account in the *Historia Augusta* of Hadrian compelling the nonagenarian Servianus to suicide “in order that he might not outlive him, and, as he thought, become emperor” reflects several of Hadrian’s attested attributes, among them his attention to detail and desire for absolute control, leaving as little as possible to chance. One can imagine his reckoning in Sabina’s case. In a very real sense the empress had been marketed as a *diva*-designate for a full quarter-century, with the campaign accelerating after the sojourn in Egypt. The emperor’s construction—starting perhaps as early as 123, and certainly by 130—of a new, enormous imperial tomb on the west bank of the Tiber shows the degree to which Hadrian was concerned with his posthumous image and, secondarily, that of his wife. If the *Augusta* were to outlive the *Augustus*, there would have been plenty of opportunity for her to engage in further liaisons and dynasty-building activities. For this reason, surely, Hadrian never extended the title *Augusta* to her half-sister, Matidia II. On the other hand, if Sabina were to die first, her apotheosis, combined with what Antinoös had already received, would have provided a powerful precedent for the emperor’s own divinization. Whatever the cause of Sabina’s death, the dying Hadrian may have seen her demise as most convenient for his legacy.

*Post-consecration Honors for Sabina:
Inscriptions, Coinage, and Sculpture*

One would never guess from our literary accounts that Hadrian’s wife was consecrated upon her death. Yet her status as *diva* is firmly attested. The sources range from the Arco di Portogallo relief panel that portrays the moment Hadrian witnesses her apotheosis, to a series of commemorative *consecratio* coins minted at Rome, to unassailable epigraphic evidence. The procedure seen for the divinization of her grandmother Marciana in 112 indicates the Senate first would have voted for consecration (perhaps as soon as the day of her death), with a public funeral

to follow some days later. Sabina's place of cremation must have been the Campus Martius, perhaps in its central area not far from the Arco di Portogallo. But further precision is impossible. Nor do we know what happened to her remains between the time of this consecration and their final interment in the dynasty's new mausoleum, attested only for late 139.¹⁶

The post-consecration coins for Sabina—issued in eight types with two distinct reverse designs—are particularly impressive. The thoughtfulness, originality, and energy that evidently went into the creation of so many lifetime and then consecration types for Sabina at Rome strongly indicate her importance for the public image of Hadrian's regime. Among other things, the exaltation of a largely voiceless Sabina served to enhance Hadrian's own future claim to divinity. The Senate must have seen this bonus when it voted the empress her consecration honors. In all likelihood, that body had not yet descended into its grave conflict with Hadrian over what our sources term his "final murders."

The task of identifying representations of the divinized Sabina is simple. On Hadrian's coins at Rome, the legends *DIVA* and *CONSECRATIO* make Sabina's status clear. The accompanying numismatic portraits also show strongly marked attributes. There a youthful, idealized Sabina is described by Adembri as "veiled, her face lightly carved, and framed by two bands of more or less wavy hair, covering at least partly the ears and collected in a low knot at the nape. Meanwhile above the forehead a crown of grain-ears or a tall lunate diadem assimilate her to divinity."¹⁷

The veil is key to Sabina's eight posthumous consecration issues, which fall into two main groups (see Appendix 1), minted in gold, silver, and bronze denominations. But the underlying hairstyles also receive studied elaboration. R. Abdy points out that in representing the deified Sabina they draw on the evocative "Egyptian" (ii) and "Aphrodite" (v) fashions, and avoid the queue (iv) so predominant in Sabina's later numismatic portraiture—and, one might add, also the first "hair up" (i) so identified with Sabina's first portraiture as Augusta, with later occurrences so common.¹⁸ Notably, the most official of Sabina's posthumous sculptural portraits—the relief that depicted her apotheosis and that later found its way onto Rome's Arco di Portogallo—shows her with a veiled hairstyle that somewhat diverges from those of the (copious) coin issues. Evidently, even after consecration the regime was introducing new variants for Sabina's image.

There are up to nine additional statues, busts, and heads that seem to portray a deified Sabina. All but one display veils. One of the most certain (accepted, e.g., by the ever-skeptical M. Wegner) is a veiled head found in the area of the Vittorio Emanuele II monument in Rome, now in the Museo Nazionale Romano at Palazzo Massimo. The sculpture shows plain evidence of polychromy, with substantial traces of red in the interior of the veil, and numerous flecks of brown in the hair.¹⁹

Vitally important, because of its context, is a bust first published in 2002 from the theater at Sessa Aurunca (in Campania, near Caserta). Sabina's half-sister, Matidia II, rebuilt that theater in the Antonine era. The unveiled head can be assigned to Sabina's last lifetime portrait type. And the hair fashion closely corresponds to that portrayed on the Portogallo relief. Originally, it seems to have formed part of an elaborate display that included also a cuirassed statue with a portrait head of Hadrian, another cuirassed statue (almost certainly Trajan), a statue that represents a veiled Matidia I, and—at a higher level than the others—a polychrome marble statue of Matidia II in a (highly unusual) running pose, with her drapery billowing in dramatic fashion.²⁰ The case is instructive, for it shows that in this instance the inclusion of Sabina's portrait—not even explicitly in divinized form—was in some part foil to a spectacular statue of Matidia II, who was not even an *Augusta* and was never to receive divinization.

The coin reverses at Rome for the divinized Sabina introduce one stirring iconographic novelty into the expected numismatic themes for the consecration: on an *aureus* and also a bronze *sestertius* type the empress is portrayed as holding a scepter and riding a flying eagle, which either carries its own scepter in its talons (on the *aureus*) or not (*sestertius*). We have noted that the eagle is the essential symbol of imperial apotheosis. As early as the Julio-Claudians and Flavians, it also was represented as a vehicle for ascent to the heavens. A famed cameo in Paris depicts the apotheosized emperor Claudius carried aloft on the back of the bird, while receiving a crown from a winged Victory. On the Arch of Titus, in a niche relief in the central portion of its vault, the deified emperor is also shown riding the back of an eagle.²¹

In the case of Sabina's coins, the iconography seems at least loosely coordinated with the Portogallo relief, where the empress rides to the heavens on the back of the winged female Genius, who in turn holds a torch in both hands. The image of transport by eagle, however, is

unprecedented on imperial coins, for either emperors or empresses. Sabina's numismatic types seem to have inspired their own genre, for a whole series of coins then show a deified honorand riding a bird of one type or other, including the belatedly deified Hadrian (eagle); Faustina II (peacock); Marcus Aurelius (eagle); Julia Maesa, the grandmother of Elagabalus and Severus Alexander (peacock); Paulina, wife of Maximinus (peacock); Mariniana, wife of Valerian (peacock); and that emperor's son Valerian II (eagle).²²

In general, the eastern cities did not put much of a premium on noting the divinization of Roman emperors and empresses on coins. So there is not much significance to the fact that there are no provincial coin issues that specifically commemorate Sabina's consecration. Indeed, no city names Sabina as *thea* ("goddess") on its coins, in life or death. Even the honorific inscriptions of the Greek east appear restrained in this regard; none can be shown to have been carved for the empress after her death and divinization.

As we have seen in Chapter 8, Ephesus offers the only clear instance of a public dedication to Sabina as "goddess," in a series of three inscribed statue bases that starts in 132/133 and may extend through 136/137. So all the possible examples date to her lifetime. A small altar at Mytilene inscribed jointly to Hadrian *Olympios* and Sabina *thea* may be either public or private; it should date to the period after 128/129 (as Hadrian's title suggests), but when both emperor and empress were alive. Individuals at Ephesus and at Patara in Lycia commemorate Sabina as "goddess" and "benefactress," but again demonstrably during her lifetime.²³

We do, however, have good evidence for private commemoration of Sabina's consecration, on gemstones. A. Carandini mentions two dozen carved gems variously held to represent Sabina, only to exclude them from consideration. Some he believes show private individuals; others he finds too hard to assess because of the lack of useful illustrations. In this discussion he isolates five gems whose images not only appear to represent the same person, but also bear close similarities to Sabina as pictured on the obverse of one of her consecration coin issues. But Carandini spots some subtle differences on the gemstone portraits: "on top of the head, apart from the veil, there appears almost always just the hint of a braid; equally the forelock appears as a knot of hair." A better match, he offers with some hesitation, may be Livia, famous for her *nodus* hairstyle.²⁴

But the mention of the hair knot in fact strengthens the identification with Sabina. We have seen (Chapter 9) that all but one of the sculptural images in which Hadrian's wife has this element in her coiffure managed to escape consideration by Carandini. With some confidence, then, we can add these five gems to the corpus of images of Sabina—and note also that they provide evidence for a private, or at any rate nonofficial, response to her divinization.

Epigraphic Dedications to the Deified Sabina

There are just three bits of inscriptional evidence for post-consecration dedications to Sabina, and all are associated with North Africa. The first two items are public dedications that come from cities Hadrian probably visited during his tour of 128 CE, in Mauretania Caesariensis and Numidia. The most significant example, however, comes from the Forum of Julius Caesar in Rome, and has to do with the thriving coastal city of Sabratha, west of modern Tripoli (Libya). In that Forum the 'Sabrathenses ex Africa' dedicated a large marble base and a (now lost) statue to Diva Sabina Augusta, on land, we are told, that Hadrian had ordered the "curators of public works and places" to set aside for the purpose. We even get a precise date: the Ides of December (i.e., the 13th of the month) in the year 138. In this instance, the phrase "the Sabrathans from Africa" almost certainly does not indicate the civic organization of Sabratha itself. Rather, it should refer to members of a group from that city acting on their own private initiative. The Sabrathans maintained a trading station in Ostia among those documented in the mosaics of the "Piazza of the Corporations," in which they symbolized their presence with an elephant (perhaps alluding to a market in ivory, if not actually import of exotic animals). Surely that was the group that made the dedication, or their compatriots trading in Rome.²⁵

It is revealing that Hadrian during his lifetime had made the provision of space in the Forum of Caesar for his wife's future honors. Whatever the facts of their actual married life, this detail provides further evidence that Hadrian publicly cherished Sabina in death. But why this date, half a year after the emperor's own demise? The Ides of December marked a festival day in Rome, in joint honor of the earth goddesses Tellus and Ceres. One recalls the frequent assimilation of Sabina to Ceres, especially in her earlier Roman and Alexandrian

coinage and in the statuary. Yet perhaps that is secondary or incidental, and the date had meaning special to Sabina. Since she seems to have died in the latter portion of 137, it is just possible that 13 December 138 was the first anniversary of her death, consecration vote, or funeral. But the best guess is that precise date marked the first anniversary of the celebrations for Hadrian's 20th year in power (*Vicennalia*), as a later calendar from Tebtunis in Egypt suggests.

And why precisely the Sabrathans? Hadrian may have touched at the Libyan port city in 123, on his flying expedition from Spain to meet a military emergency in Syria. But he is not known to have favored the city with particular benefactions; colonial status probably came only under Antoninus Pius. The city in turn shows no dedications to Hadrian in his lifetime. Sabratha, however, had given Rome the wife of a future emperor and the mother of two others, in the person of Flavia Domitilla, the spouse of Vespasian, who (almost certainly) had been consecrated. That source of provincial pride might explain the Sabrathans' wish in December 138, perhaps on a significant anniversary, to express particular devotion to the deified Sabina, in a prestigious spot in Rome that Hadrian himself earlier had earmarked.²⁶

It probably was another ten to 12 months following the Sabrathans' dedication before the deified empress' remains found a place in the mausoleum that her husband had built, today's Castel Sant'Angelo. As we have seen (Chapter 5), it was only in late 139 that the new emperor Antoninus Pius finished his predecessor's monumental tomb. The exterior inscription that he set up at that time for "his parents" listed Hadrian with full titulature, including divine patronymics, and simply *Diva Sabina* without the title *Augusta*. What would be plain to all at the time of dedication of this magnificent mausoleum was the embarrassing fact that the Senate had not yet consented to vote the deceased emperor the same divine honors as his wife. Nor would it seem the prospect of Hadrian's consecration was yet assured.

Significantly, Hadrian had oriented his gargantuan tomb precisely along the cardinal directions, with its entrance facing to the south. A common modern view is that the structure was meant to emphasize the emperor's association with the sun, or even serve as a symbolic representation of the cosmos. It is quite possible it was constructed also with an eye toward archaeoastronomical effects, such are attested for the Villa at Tivoli. Hadrian no doubt intended his mausoleum to make both a personal and dynastic statement. His vision here was

fully realized, for it served as the tomb for members of all the *domus Augusta* from Sabina, Hadrian, and L. Aelius Caesar, to Faustina I and Antoninus Pius, and then all the way through the Severans, ending with Caracalla (died 217). A second, exceedingly long phase of development commenced when the emperor Aurelian (reigned 270–275) recast the mausoleum as a bastion in the enormous circuit of defensive walls he built for Rome. Subsequent reuse, especially as the most important papal fortress, inevitably has obscured many of the tomb's original elements, especially on the upper portions. The upshot is that the evidence for the original decorations for the mausoleum and even its general appearance is quite circumstantial, and as such, hotly disputed.

One of the commonly accepted decorative elements, however, seems relevant to Sabina. A stunning attribute of the mausoleum was a tufa wall with railing that surrounded its perimeter (uncovered in 1892), on which were placed gilded bronze peacocks. Two of those peacocks are extant, today exhibited in the Braccio Nuovo of the Vatican Museums. The reference of these birds to female apotheosis seems unmistakable. If indeed Hadrianic or earliest Antonine in date, they should allude to the deified Sabina entombed within.²⁷

The Ascent of Matidia II

One consequence of the death of Sabina is that it left just one surviving member of the imperial *domus* who could claim relation by blood (as opposed to marriage or adoption) to the family of Trajan. That was her half-sister, Matidia II. The link to Trajan for both Matidia II and Sabina was of course matrilinear, through their mother, Matidia I.

Though older than Sabina (who was born ca. 85 CE), Matidia II outlived her and witnessed not just the reign of Antoninus Pius but also the first years of his adoptive sons and successors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. Indeed, she was to live perhaps as late as 165 CE, and so may well have reached her 80th year. In some respects, we have more information about the personal attributes of Matidia II (especially her substantial wealth and euergistic activities) than for her sister, the empress. M. T. Boatwright notes, in addition to Matidia's receiving expected dedications such as honorific statues, the evidence that "her vast possessions included land in Mauretania, Asia, and Italy; and she gave benefactions in Cisalpine Gaul (Northern Italy) and in Campania.

Letters to and from Fronto during Marcus Aurelius' reign mention her at the end of her life."²⁸

Matidia II is not known to have married. It may be that Trajan and later Hadrian positively stopped her from doing so (by withholding dowry, or by even more direct means), so as to prevent her forming an unwanted locus of power, and potentially complicating the line of succession. What is certain is that Hadrian never allowed Matidia II the title *Augusta*—not surprising, since he waited more than a decade after accession to grant that honorific to his own wife. Yet in terms of distinction in birth, Matidia II was essentially equivalent to her half-sister. With Hadrian's accession, they both found themselves as great-granddaughters of the deified Trajan Pater (whom Hadrian never bothered to reference on his coins or elsewhere), grandnieces of the deified emperor Trajan, granddaughters of the deified Marciana, and (after late 119) daughters of the deified Matidia I. In 128, when Hadrian and Sabina embarked on their great Third Journey to the east, Matidia II perhaps tagged along, in the company of Hadrian's sister, Domitia Paulina. If so, she left practically no trace on that tour. All we have is a possible private dedication made to a relative of Hadrian (missing both name and title) at Patara in Lycia.²⁹

The deaths of Sabina and Hadrian highlighted the status of Matidia II as the last survivor of the house of Trajan. And this enhanced dynastic importance in turn massively elevated her scope for conspicuous euergetism and general freedom of expression. We have noted the younger Matidia's cheeky presentation of self and family at the theater she restored at Sessa Aurunca in Campania in the early 140s, in which the sculptural program forced attention on a dynamic portrait of her living self among the distinguished and deified dead of her imperial house.

However, the most striking way in which Matidia II shone forth was through novel formulations in her honorific titles. We have for her about 15 secure epigraphic dedications, most from Rome or Italy (seven alone from Sessa Aurunca, a center for her benefactions), but also the provinces of Raetia (*Augusta Vindelicorum* = Augsburg, in Bavaria), Achaëa (Athens, which provides our sole inscription in Greek), and Asia (Ephesus, where the Council and city set up a statue to her inscribed in Latin). Only that of Raetia explicitly invokes her relationship to the divine Trajan, in calling her the emperor's *abneptis*, or, literally, "great-great-granddaughter," but here with the loose meaning "distant descendant." On the other hand, all the dedications emphasize

her status as daughter of the *Augusta* Matidia I—oddly, not always noted as *diva*, though none of these items should predate her mother’s consecration in 119. Most of these inscriptions add also some of Matidia II’s other family connections, as granddaughter of Marciana, sister of Sabina—each always noted in the Latin inscriptions as deified—and “maternal aunt” of the emperor Antoninus Pius. That last appellation marks a stretch but is technically correct, since that emperor publicly honored Hadrian and Sabina as his parents.

Ephesus (with its public gesture by Council and city) and Sessa Aurunca are the only places where dedicators cited all four of Matidia II’s illustrious roles as granddaughter, daughter, sister, and aunt. At Sessa Aurunca, she received dedications from the people of that town and also from nearby Minturnae in those terms; and significantly she herself used that full genealogical titulature in the inscription that commemorated her restoration of the theater.

In their shortest form, inscriptions pertaining to Matidia II are worded as MATIDIAE AVG F (or FIL). We find this only on lead waterpipes from Rome (on which see Chapter 9), Ostia, and Frascati. The abbreviation here means “of Matidia, daughter of the *Augusta*” (i.e., Matidia I). Of course, the collocation of name and matronymic in this way—we find it heading fully nine of her Latin inscriptions, which come in various lengths—seems almost designed to give the impression to the casual reader that Matidia II herself was an *Augusta*. Furthermore, 12 of the inscriptions indicate that she was just not daughter of Matidia I, but also sister of Sabina *Augusta*. We have seen (in Chapter 2) how the official styling of Marciana as “sister of the emperor” on coinage of the year 112 was quite unprecedented, and remained isolated. The advertisement in these inscriptions of Matidia’s status as “sister of the empress” marks a further novelty, which reflects the still-expanding importance of the emperor’s wife at the center of the imperial *domus*.

In sum, the elements and wording across this sample of dedications to Matidia II are close enough to suggest official guidance in the matter of her titulature. The general sense one gets is that dedicants were encouraged to adapt Matidia II’s impressive genealogy to compensate (indeed, overcompensate) for her failure to receive the title of *Augusta*. The date of all but three of the Latin texts—each on lead waterpipes and inscribed with the shortest form of the title, MATIDIAE AVG(usta) f(ilia)—definitely falls after her sister’s consecration. The Greek inscription from Athens, a dedication to Matidia II in ostensible recompense

for some act of “good will,” is the only one to mention her as sister simply of Sabina *Augusta*, without further indication of the elevation to *diva*. But it should be noted that the Athenian dedicators here identify also Marciana and Matidia I, deified in 112 and 119, respectively, also merely as *Sebaste*, and so an Antonine date seems fully possible. The conclusion? The death of Sabina created for her half-sister a useful void, into which her titles quite literally expanded.³⁰

Priestesses for the Deified Sabina

Despite the strenuous efforts of Hadrian to foreground and promote his wife in life and in death, and of Matidia II to exploit her status as half-sister of the deified empress, the evidence is slight for Sabina’s imperial cult taking deep root after her consecration. It was the northern Italian municipalities that provided the chief evidence—and not for long. After the Antonines, the evidence for dedicated priestesses of Sabina wholly dries up.

Epigraphy provides us just two examples. Ariminum (= Rimini, on the Adriatic coast), which had created for its high-status women the position of priestess (*sacerdos*) of the deified Plotina, added one also for Sabina, probably soon after deification.³¹ And an Antonine-era inscription of Novaria (today’s Novara in the Piedmont region) reveals a husband and wife who together served the cultic needs of five different consecrated members of the imperial house, in two different locales. The husband, a former equestrian procurator of Britain named C. Valerius Pansa, held the title of *flamen* (priest) for Vespasian, Trajan, and Hadrian in Novaria. Meanwhile, his wife, Albucia Candida, as *flaminica* (priestess) administered the cult of the deified Julia (daughter of Titus) at Novaria, and that of the deified Sabina at Ticinum (modern Pavia), some 75 km distant.

It is noteworthy but not entirely surprising to find a priestess dedicated to Julia, who had never been empress; one finds a few priestesses in Italy also for Marciana and Matidia I. What is surprising is to see one woman serving both a minor *diva* of generations past and also a more contemporary one of more immediate importance. As E. A. Hemelrijk observes, Albucia’s priesthoods in those two locales need not have been simultaneous, but rather consecutive, held at different times of her life. What is certain is that she was enormously

rich. Albucia's will (implemented by her husband, who survived her) provided 200,000 sesterces to Novaria, which were used for the restoration and enlargement of a bath complex in the town—the most costly benefaction for that type of structure on record for a municipal woman in the Roman west. That would explain why Ticinum had Albucia Candida holding its Sabina priesthood—by invitation, in the hope of receiving a benefaction or two on the same scale.³² Indeed, the extreme rarity of the cult of the deified Sabina admits the possibility that Ticinum inaugurated one expressly for the purpose of recruiting the rich Albucia as its first occupant.

Sabina's Later Imperial Namesake

It was Sabina's adoptive grandson, Marcus Aurelius, and his wife, Faustina II, who paid what we can regard as the final official tribute to the deified empress. Some years after Marcus' accession in 161, they chose the name Vibia Aurelia Sabina for a new daughter, who would be the last born of their 14 children. The date of birth of this girl (the couple's sixth) is uncertain, but no earlier than 166 and very probably closer to the year 171. Since the birth of their first child in 147, Marcus and Faustina had been choosing children's names to honor ancestors comprehensively from both sides of the family—including 'Hadrianus' for a boy evidently born late in the series.

Vibia Aurelia Sabina somehow managed to survive her brother Commodus's reign (180–192)—unlike her husband the consular L. Antistius Burrus, whom the emperor put to death for supposed conspiracy in 189. She was remarried, probably at the emperor Septimius Severus' insistence, to a man of strikingly humbler station, the son of one of Lucius Verus' imperial freedman. Children are not attested from either marriage. Inscriptions show Vibia Aurelia Sabina active as a patron, but only in north Africa, with her benefactions centered especially on tiny Thibilis in Numidia, her first husband's hometown. Thibilis seems to have made her a citizen, and she may even have lived there, at least for her last years. If this was deliberate strategy for survival, it worked. This adoptive great-granddaughter of *Diva Augusta* Sabina saw the joint reign of Septimius' sons, Caracalla and Geta, and perhaps lived some years beyond Geta's death in 211.³³

Epilogue

“Sabina was the daughter of Matidia and the wife of Hadrian. She committed suicide, leaving no children.”¹ In this way a mid-19th-century numismatist bluntly sums up the total of what he felt one needed to know about the empress. The infuriating thing is that his 17 words capture pretty much everything that the ancient literary sources have to say about Sabina, and add a fact that they omit, express identification of her mother. So it seems unfair to make too much of a fuss over the standard modern-era presentations of the empress. In the main, they simply take the terse and tendentious accounts of the *Historia Augusta* and some later epitomators at face value, and fill in the copious blanks. That includes even her full name. Older writers regularly refer to “Julia Sabina,” which even now crops up occasionally in nonspecialist works.

In truth, the shards of Sabina’s story as we get them practically beg for reconstitution and elaboration. There is the surprising and speedy ascent of her granduncle Trajan to the throne, elevation that prompted her political marriage at age 15 or so to his one-time ward, Hadrian; her husband’s evident dependence on Trajan’s wife Plotina for advancement to imperial power, and the deep emotional bond he developed to her as well as to Sabina’s own mother, both of whom he later divinized and honored with temples in Rome; Hadrian’s extensive travels throughout the empire, in the company of Sabina or not; his reported coldness (indeed, hostility) toward his wife, and purge of some senior staff when it was felt they showed her too little respect; the emperor’s very public attachment to the youth Antinoös, and the extreme honors he allowed the lad after his suspicious death by drowning in the Nile; Hadrian’s retreat, on return to Italy, to the grandiose private theme park and

country residence he had built at Tivoli; his final wasting illness, which occasioned a belated and bizarre choice of heir in Ceionius Commodus; and Sabina's own reported suicide or murder, followed (more than a little grotesquely) by Hadrian's consecration of her as a goddess.

Each of these items is intensely suggestive in themselves. And since antiquity has not left us a decent continuous narrative that imposes coherence on the story fragments of Sabina, the past 500 years or so have seen a fair number of efforts to do just that. Yet one of the greatest authorities to treat the era simply did not bother, whether finding the subject matter too trivial or odious. In the relevant volume of his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (I, 1776), E. Gibbon never mentions Hadrian's wife. Rather, he calls the emperor "the lover of Antinous," whom he then condemns in a footnote: "the deification . . . his medals, statues, temples, city, oracles and constellation are well known and still dishonour the memory of Hadrian."²

The Early-Modern and Modern Reception of Sabina: An Overview

A proper discussion of the reception of Sabina in post-antique historiography, art, and literature would necessarily involve also that of Hadrian and Antinoös, and as such could easily double the size of this book. The tale would properly start with the erection of the Arco di Portogallo over the Via del Corso in Rome, and the addition of those two Hadrianic historical reliefs as *spolia* onto its north face, with the large panel showing the consecration of Sabina placed on the right. It seems fair to say that practically every person who set foot in the historical center of Rome in the high- and late-medieval, Renaissance, and early-Baroque periods caught at least a glimpse of the scene of the strange winged female figure wafting the veiled noble woman to the heavens. The precise identification hardly mattered, since the basic meaning of the scene of ascent (even if heavily damaged) was clear. Indeed, C. Lindgren has posited this rendering of Sabina's apotheosis as a source for several notable 15th- and earlier-16th-century depictions of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary (Titian, Correggio), as well as the Ascension of Jesus Christ (Andrea Mantegna). What is more, M. Finch finds resonances of the relief in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling frescoes. In general, this investigation of the impact of Sabina's

apotheosis panel seems to be a productive if demanding line of inquiry.³ By extension, one would want to examine the history of early-modern attributions of ancient sculptural portraits to Sabina, many of which clearly are not.

Then there are the historiographical efforts. As good a starting point as any would be the Spanish court preacher and royal chronicler Antonio de Guevara (ca. 1481–1545), whose biography of Hadrian in his breezy 1539 work *La década de Césares* (*The Ten Caesars*, meant as an ethical guide for young royalty) picks up where the *Historia Augusta* leaves off. Guevara makes Sabina not just free of speech but also a heavy drinker and a writer of illicit love letters.⁴

Or consider the French historian Jacques Roergas de Serviez (1679–1727), whose 1718 *Les Femmes des douze Césars* offers an early full-length essay on our empress. By 1723 his work had found translation into English, with many editions to follow, well into the 20th century. De Serviez sticks much closer to the sources than the freewheeling Guevara, but fills the gaps with much heavy moralizing. “Sabina was not at all the more fortunate for being raised to the Empire,” he reflects, “but on the contrary fell a sacrifice to her grandeur. . . . [S]he found herself no better than a miserable slave in the most elevated dignity in the universe.” In the end Hadrian puts her to death, “just when she had conceived expectations of a better fate from her husband’s illness.”⁵

What established itself as the standard reference on Sabina for generations to come was the account of another French historian, J. B. L. Crevier, in his massive *Histoire des empereurs Romains, depuis Auguste jusqu’à Constantin* (10 volumes, published 1749–1755, with an English language edition appearing in 1756–1761). Crevier emphasizes Hadrian’s political calculations in sustaining his marriage with Sabina despite their mutual hatred. In Crevier’s version, Hadrian carries his persecution of Sabina so far that he orders members of his court “designedly, to affront her.” This cruelty is what undid Septicius Clarus, Suetonius, and others, we are told. “They affected to enter into the passion of their prince, and imagined they should please him in not waiting for his orders before they behaved themselves rudely to his empress.”⁶

Contemporary efforts to represent Sabina in the arts are rare. The outstanding example is the imaginative opera *Adriano in Siria*, the text by Pietro Metastasio (1698–1782), which was first performed in 1732 to music by the composer Antonio Caldara (1670–1736). Metastasio jettisons practically every received historical notion except that Hadrian

spent time in Syrian Antioch, that Sabina was the niece of Trajan, and that the emperor abusively took her for granted. In the opera, the young Hadrian's affections are split between his long-term fiancée (*sic*) Sabina and the imprisoned Emirena, beautiful daughter of the deposed Parthian king Osroa. What is notable about Metastasio's presentation of Sabina is its empathy, and he sketches her as a paradigm of virtue and wise forbearance. Metastasio's work had instant and prolonged success, especially with European royalty. More than 60 additional composers set his libretto, the last in 1828, revising the text as they saw fit, often radically.⁷

It is not often that we find such sustained attention on Sabina in history, art, or literature. Most representations of the empress—across the centuries—consist of ancillary appearances in biographical or novelistic treatments of Hadrian, and few are especially probing. And when Antinoös is introduced into the mix, Sabina tends to recede sharply. For instance, future Nobel laureate Paul Heyse's tragedy *Hadrian* (1865) dispenses with Sabina altogether, but introduces a foster sister for Antinoös, who dies while trying to help the youth escape Hadrian. In Adolph Hausrath's novel *Antinous* (1880), it is briefly noted that Hadrian and Sabina live separated lives, and so the focus is turned entirely toward a complex Antinoös who struggles against thoughts of homosexuality and Christianity.

Kentucky-born writer Abbe Carter Goodloe blazes her own trail in *Antinoüs: A Tragedy* (1891), which she published at age 24, just two years after graduating from Wellesley College in Massachusetts. In her five-act play, which she ambitiously wrote in neo-Shakespearean blank verse, Goodloe foregrounds Hadrian, Sabina, and Antinoös. Yet the tragedy is in good part that of the empress. The author borrows explicitly from Crevier's character sketch of a disrespected and neglected Sabina, and at the same time dwells on the mutual love of Hadrian and his "slave" Antinoös with as much candor as she can muster for her times. Goodloe also introduces plenty of new narrative twists. When Sabina's conspiratorial mutterings with Lucius Verus (= Ceionius Commodus) are disclosed to the emperor, it leads to her suicide by poison. And this drama all happens even before the lovers Hadrian and Antinoös journey to Egypt—where the youth resolves to sacrifice himself in the Nile to ensure the emperor's longevity.

The German novelist Georg Ebers in *The Emperor* (1880, English translation 1881) takes a completely different tack, by introducing the

most physically unattractive, sharp-tongued, depressed, and sickly Sabina the world had yet seen. The downtrodden Sabina especially hates the handsome Antinoös, who eventually drowns himself in the Nile out of unrequited love for a martyred Christian maiden. Meanwhile, her companion the poet Balbilla had idolized Antinoös, and is devastated by the loss—until she finds love and marriage with Hadrian’s favorite architect.⁸

Eber’s *The Emperor* expressly informed the artistic choices that his friend, the Dutch artist Lawrence Alma-Tadema, employed in his large-scale painting “Hadrian in England” (Figure 19), first shown in London at the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1884. The setting of the composition is arresting. The emperor and his entourage (which includes Sabina,



FIGURE 19. Amsterdam (Stedelijk Museum, inv. s 137 B/1996): Lawrence Alma-Tadema, *Hadrian Visiting a Romano-British Pottery* (section of larger work, *Hadrian in England*, 1884). Oil on canvas, 159 × 171 cm.

Credit: Stedelijk Museum

Balbilla, and Ceionius Commodus) are visiting not the obvious symbol of assertive Roman imperialism in Britain—his great Wall—but rather a Romano-British pottery factory *cum* salesroom. In the painting Sabina sports a particularly severe version of the early “Matidian” hairstyle, and holds a bouquet of flowers, presumably presented to her by the pottery-shop owner’s wife, with whom she and Balbilla make chit-chat. It is in turns amusing and befuddling that this distinctively daring composition seems to be the only modern attempt to render the empress on canvas. Nor has anyone yet successfully attempted to bring Hadrian, Sabina, or Antinoös to a cinema screen.⁹

Let us skip ahead a few generations. Standing somewhere between fantasy and scholarship is a well-informed 1935 effort by Sulamith Ish-Kishor, primarily an author of children’s books, entitled *Magnificent Hadrian*. No less a literary figure than the great American novelist Theodore Dreiser wrote the introduction. The bulk of the work is devoted to the ancient charge of Hadrian deliberately causing the death of Antinoös. The explanation Ish-Kishor offers, at great length, is a psychological disquisition on “the homosexual conflict” between the masculine and feminine components in Antinoös, with an ultra-assertive Hadrian destroying the boyish object of his infatuation. As for Sabina, she started off “gay, individual, pert and sweet. As years moved on, her gayety wore away in loneliness, her individuality perished in neglect, her pertness hardened into temper, her sweetness atrophied.” In some important respects, this portrayal represents a major step backward for Sabina. Ish-Kishor essentially takes the hostile ancient accounts at their word, though attempting to trace development in the empress’s character.¹⁰

Meanwhile, Mussolini’s Italy was engaged in a massive re-evaluation of its past, with energetic rummaging for all possible precursors to Fascism. For this regime, the purportedly pacific Hadrian held faint interest and attracted little official attention. An outstanding exception is the enormous “Mostra Augustea della romanità” that ran in Rome’s Palazzo delle Esposizioni for a full year, from 23 September 1937 to the same date in 1938. The exhibition aimed to radiate back to Rome’s origins and forward to the Christian era, all the while suggesting explicit continuity with the Fascist present. Here representation of the emperor Hadrian’s reign suggests careful thought and selection. There were about a half dozen reproductions of Hadrianic inscriptions, and some casts of portrait sculpture, including two heads of the

emperor wedged suggestively between the cast of a head of Antinoös now in Florence, and one of Sabina from the Palazzo dei Conservatori in Rome. Sabina and Antinoös made cameo appearances elsewhere in the show, the latter in the form of a relief from the Villa at Tivoli.

Somewhat more modest than the “Mostra Augustea” were efforts in 1938 to commemorate the 1800th anniversary of the death of Hadrian. That event took the form of a book exhibit, housed in the Mausoleum of Hadrian, the Castel Sant’Angelo. The organizers explained in some detail the aims of the show, and its two rooms of exhibits “to highlight what can entice the public to learn about the true moral and political figure of Hadrian—a figure deformed, in the minds of most people, thanks to a belittling or tendentious historical tradition.” Instead, it was hoped that the the public would see the emperor’s 21-year reign for its “multifaceted and tireless work, all inspired by a sense of Roman greatness and consciousness of the civilizing and peace-making mission of the Empire.”

Almost half the exhibit was devoted to the figure of ‘Adriano KTISTES’ which the curators translated as ‘costruttore.’ ‘Costruire’—“to build”—long before had entered the political vocabulary of Fascism as a watchword and ideal of Mussolini’s regime. As for Antinoös, he gets barely a mention in the catalogue, Sabina none. Indeed, the general impression one gets is that for Fascist Italy, Hadrian offered precious little “usable history” until the regime in 1940 set its sights on Albania and Greece. There Hadrian’s Arch at Athens with its assertive proclamation on its western face, “this is Athens, the former city of Theseus,” and on the eastern, “this is the city of Hadrian, not of Theseus,” served as a potent symbol of Roman imperialism.¹¹

For the post-World War II era—and indeed, for any age—the landmark fictional treatment of Hadrian’s life and reign is that of the Belgian-born writer Marguerite Yourcenar (1903–1987). Her 1951 *Memoirs of Hadrian*, which takes the form of a long letter of the dying emperor to his adoptive grandson, Marcus Aurelius, has justly been recognized as a literary effort of the highest order. In this exceptionally well-researched and stunningly perceptive work, Sabina hardly figures, except in some side references to her now familiar role as the vexatious wife. Consequentially, the novelist denies Hadrian the act of her consecration. In this Yourcenar deliberately chooses an old view, most closely associated with the pioneering numismatist J. H. Eckhel (1737–1798), who found Hadrian’s consecration of Sabina so hard to

swallow in view of the biographical tradition that he took great pains to demonstrate that it was rather his successor, Antoninus, who must have divinized her.¹²

Of subsequent fictional works on Hadrian and Sabina, only that of Elizabeth Speller (*Following Hadrian*, 2004) comes even close to that of Yourcenar. Most of Speller's chapters begin with an excerpt from the (fictional) "Memoirs of Julia Balbilla," followed by well-informed speculation on this or that aspect of Hadrian's life. Here Sabina features much more prominently than in Yourcenar's *Memoirs*; the narrative includes Balbilla's intimation that it was Sabina who might have been responsible for Antinoös' death in Egypt.

Indeed, the few items we have for Sabina are bound to invite continued stabs at (very) creative writing for some years to come. Almost at random, note the blurb for *Lady of the Eternal City* (2015), by the American romantic historical novelist Kate Quinn. "Elegant, secretive Sabina may be Empress of Rome, but she still stands poised on a knife's edge. She must keep the peace between two deadly enemies: her husband Hadrian, Rome's brilliant and sinister Emperor; and battered warrior Vix, who is her first love. But Sabina is guardian of a deadly secret: Vix's beautiful son Antinous has become the Emperor's latest obsession." The novel is Quinn's third to feature the figures of a sultry Sabina and ultra-hunky Vix (also known as Vercingetorix).

Some Conclusions

A common thread that runs through modern understandings of Sabina, from Antonio de Guevara in the 16th century to Kate Quinn in the 21st, is that Hadrian treated his wife poorly. The supposition is natural enough, since that is what the ancient literary sources unequivocally tell us. We have attributed the dismal tradition on this marriage especially to the Severan-era senatorial historian Marius Maximus, who seems to have determined the direction and tone of subsequent accounts, which are all that we ourselves have. Yet even if our sources had nothing to say on the matter, it is not hard to see why life would have been tough for this emperor's wife. Just a few short summarized passages from Dio Cassius give us plenty to ponder. Hadrian practiced every conceivable pursuit, we are told, even the most trivial. His jealousy of others' excellence could prove fatal to them. He was excessively

strict, obsessive, and meddlesome. He checked neither his anger nor his grief. This is a troublesome collection of personal qualities, but the ancient record seems to confirm it amply.¹³

We have a helpful first-person statement from Hadrian himself on the virtues he especially admired in a woman. It comes from his fragmentary speech of praise for Sabina's mother, Matidia I, a eulogy he delivered either just before or at the time he divinized her in late 119 CE. The list of virtues he discerned in his mother-in-law is long, even given the state of our text: "her combination of gentleness and gravity, her chastity combined with great beauty, her tenderness, modesty, amiability to all, and family loyalty."¹⁴

Hadrian's praise—which takes in physical appearance, character, and temperament—ought to have been heartfelt. The massive temple that he soon built for Matidia, which was as tall if not taller than his own adjacent Pantheon, is probably proof enough. Yet there are other telling signs of his deep affection for his mother-in-law. In the empire's official hierarchy, both Trajan and Hadrian consistently ranked the empress Plotina above the elder Matidia and her own mother, Marciana. That regard is clear from Plotina's lifetime coins, both from Rome and the provinces. Death was a different matter. Hadrian struck numerous issues for the deified Matidia, and even a medal with the unique legend "to his divine mother-in-law"; Plotina, however, received no commemorative coin specifically to mark her consecration. And when Hadrian was thinking up civic divisions for his new, highly personal foundation of Antinoöpolis in 130/131, he made sure to honor Matidia's name at the top (tribal) level, under which he pointedly subordinated both Trajan's wife, Plotina, and sister, Marciana, by assigning their names to its constituent demes.

We cannot know how Sabina's personal attributes compared in Hadrian's eyes to those of her mother. The eulogy itself, made 20 years into their marriage and more than two years after the accession, suggests that they fell somewhat short. Indeed, it looks as if his disappointment had spilled over into the public sphere. From our vantage point, Hadrian in his first decade of rule took great pains to promote the Ulpian extended family but conspicuously excluded Sabina herself.

Now, Trajan had been notably assertive in his desire to build an Ulpian dynasty from scratch. He neglected to change his name after he forced the emperor Nerva to adopt him in 97. Another red-letter date was the year 112, when Trajan took his sixth (and final) consulship. In

just the first eight months of that year he dedicated his hugely impressive Forum in Rome, divinized both his (long dead) father and (recently deceased) sister, Marciana, and elevated his niece, Matidia, to the position of *Augusta*. Henceforth Trajan could claim parentage from two *divi* (i.e., his adoptive father, Nerva, and now his biological father), as well as point toward divine ancestry for Marciana, Matidia I—and his grandnieces Sabina and Matidia the Younger.

Trajan died in Cilicia in August 117, in the company of both Plotina and the elder Matidia; Hadrian at Antioch instantly proclaimed himself emperor. Hadrian obviously felt enormous pressure to dispel the clouds of suspicion concerning the legitimacy of his deathbed adoption by Trajan, which many thought Plotina simply had faked. One of the first orders of business, to obtain divine honors for Trajan from the Senate, he hurriedly did by letter. At the same time Hadrian started issuing what turns out to be a mind-numbing series of coins honoring his predecessor's family to emphasize a dynastic connection—including more than two dozen issues that commemorated Plotina while alive and Sabina's mother Matidia both pre- and post-consecration. These series include several issues with Hadrian on the obverse and the widowed Plotina on the reverse—quite an astounding development, since a Trajan/Plotina coin never was struck in Rome in that emperor's lifetime. Curiously, at the time Hadrian minted nothing to advertise his marriage to Sabina, which was the obvious and undisputed link to the Ulpians.

Nor do new coins commemorate the deified Trajan senior and Marciana. There must have been a point to this, namely, to emphasize that the two Trajanic *Augustae* whom Hadrian had inherited (i.e., Plotina and Matidia I) were important enough in their own persons, quite apart from their divine descent. Soon enough Hadrian ensured that these two women were deified: Matidia in 119, and Trajan's wife, Plotina, sometime after her death in late 122 or early 123. So by the mid-120s, the surviving Ulpian women—Sabina and her half-sister, Matidia II—found themselves at a status level that no Roman woman had yet achieved, namely, in the simultaneous positions of great-granddaughters, granddaughters, daughters, and grandnieces of gods.

The death and divinization of Sabina's mother in December 119 brought a surprising non-decision. Hadrian chose not to follow the precedent Trajan set seven years previous, when the emperor had Matidia appointed *Augusta* on the same day her mother was

consecrated. Indeed, it was to take Sabina a full eight years after her own mother's death and divinization to receive the distinction, which came only in early 128. No wife of a living emperor had such a markedly delayed introduction as *Augusta*—in Sabina's case, in the 11th year of her husband's principate. Her half-sister, Matidia II, never gained the title, though she lived through Hadrian's entire reign, and that of his successor, Antoninus Pius, to boot.

This surely was not simple peevishness on Hadrian's part. Rather, it was a deliberate strategy to leverage his wife's inherent prestige and latent power to the full. The Flavians and Trajan had spread the honor of *Augusta* quite widely. By withholding it for a time, and then limiting it strictly to his wife, Hadrian perhaps aimed to enhance its luster. What he clearly planned was that Sabina's assumption of the title should immediately precede his own acceptance of the culminating imperial prize, the traditional appellation "Father of the Fatherland." That title came only in early 128, when empress and emperor, in tight sequence, were respectively made *Augusta* and *pater patriae*.

There is every sign that Hadrian tightly controlled dissemination of his wife's image during this dramatic decade-long delay. The Rome mint struck nothing for Sabina, except perhaps a single issue just before the *Augusta* appointment. Here there was recent precedent, since Trajan too did not coin for his wife until his sixth consulship, 14 years into his reign. Provincial mints seem to have followed the lead of Rome, after some isolated confusion right after Hadrian's accession. Official portrait sculpture securely datable to this period is lacking.

If Sabina accompanied her husband on his Second Journey of 121–125 (Rhine and Upper Danube, then Britain, Gaul, Spanish Tarraconensis, a mad dash to Syria, followed by Anatolia, and finally Greece), there is no firm evidence of it. There are some indications of pent-up enthusiasm for the new empress, e.g., with dedications of statues to Sabina in Lusitania and especially, as part of a much larger group, at Pamphylian Perge in 121. But we find no evidence of Sabina showing a real public face in the first decade of her husband's rule. All we get from these years is a hazy report of a court scandal somehow involving Sabina, a rumor that causes Hadrian to make a serious top-level administrative shake-up around the time of his expedition to Britain in 122.

Sabina's long introductory years as empress may have seemed as much a puzzle to contemporaries as to us. So the belated public declaration in 128 of those titles for Sabina and Hadrian would have made quite

an impact. So would the news of a planned imperial tour—Hadrian’s third—for both emperor and empress, that would involve extended stays in Athens, Antioch (it seems), and Alexandria. In the event, that journey was to fill out a full five years. First, Hadrian (perhaps without Sabina) made preliminary stops in Sicily, Africa Proconsularis, and Mauretania. Then came Athens (later 128), where Hadrian took on the new title ‘Olympios,’ and, by completing the Temple of Olympian Zeus (begun in the 520s BCE), secured his assimilation to the king of the gods—and that of his wife to the Olympian queen, Hera. Anatolia and Syria (129) followed, then Judaea (where the emperor most provocatively resettled Jerusalem as a Roman colony, in which Jupiter was the religious focus), Arabia Petraea, and Egypt (130).

The visit to Egypt was obviously meant from the start to be a high point of the Third Journey. Indeed, there was an ancient tradition that seeing the province was the whole motivating force for Hadrian’s journey to the east, the culmination of his curiosity seeking, as well as a quest for renewed health. But drama was soon to intervene, in late October 130. “While sailing on the Nile he lost his Antinoös, and for this youth he wept like a woman.” And so the *Historia Augusta* sums up the most notorious event not just of this imperial journey, but also of Hadrian’s entire reign.¹⁵ Perversely (and characteristically), the biographer omits a crucial fact, that the emperor immediately founded a new city in his beloved youth’s honor, Antinoöpolis, at the site of the drowning.

Yet the imperial touring party—which at this point seems to have numbered about 5000 individuals, and so formed a mobile small town—soon pressed on. Hadrian, Sabina, and some number of their entourage are found on 19–21 November 130 visiting the famous “singing” colossal statue of Memnon near Thebes, some 300 km south of the drowning site. Sabina herself left an impromptu inscription, which a mason carved for her on the lower left leg of the gigantic seated statue, to commemorate her encounter with the macabre monument: “Sabina Augusta, (the wife) of Emperor Caesar Hadrian, has twice heard [Memnon] within the [?first] hour.”¹⁶ What is more, the Seleucid princess Julia Balbilla memorialized the pilgrimage of Hadrian and Sabina to the statue in four epigraphic poems, strikingly composed in a sustained recreation of Sappho’s long-dead Lesbian literary dialect.

These Memnon inscriptions capture for us, at least for a flashing moment, the empress Sabina in three dimensions. The supremely

self-involved poetry of Julia Balbilla offers us a window into Hadrian's ultra-competitive court culture, which patently extended to the princess's competition with the empress herself. And when she does get around to praising Sabina, Balbilla brilliantly illustrates which of her official qualities mattered at that moment. The list has only slight contact with the (numerous) virtues Hadrian attested for her mother, Matidia. For Sabina, Balbilla highlights her youthfulness, seductive beauty, religious piety, marital fidelity, and (most important) ability to commune with the divine. This is a highly charismatic image of an empress, unlike any that Rome had ever seen. It shows the same spirit of extreme experimentalism that we soon find in the centrally managed marketing (for want of a better word) of the deceased Antinoös, not just as a Greek "hero" but also as a divine intermediary between worlds.

The process had started with Sabina's elevation to *Augusta* in early 128. We must keep in mind that it was only then that Rome's empire had a real chance to see what Sabina looked like. Immediately after the empress had received the title, Rome's mint, as well as those in the eastern cities (certainly Alexandria, also Aegeae in Cilicia, several localities in western Asia Minor, and no doubt others), circulated on a mass scale their first coins bearing the image of Sabina, celebrating her new designation. The appointment also inaugurated the production of Sabina's first official portrait sculpture. And what did folks see? An empress who looked distinctly like her deified mother, Matidia, perhaps also her divine grandmother Marciana. After almost a dozen years as empress, the central message of Sabina's long-delayed portraiture was to stress her connections and continuity with the women of Trajan's family.

Surprises, however, were in store. As R. Abdy has observed, Sabina was to be the first Roman empress ever to receive a sustained, regular production of coinage. Now, we ought to keep in mind that the imperial women who preceded Sabina customarily had been represented on the coinage and in sculpture as a single, readily recognizable archetype, with perhaps small variants. Portraits of Sabina also continued to evoke her family origins: the image of the empress with a braided, piled-up "Matidian" hairstyle keeps popping up on the coins for the rest of her lifetime, i.e., down to late 137. But Hadrian's regime also expended enormous—indeed, unprecedented—effort on constantly updating the empress's public image over that same span of time. In all, we find five distinct lifetime hair styles introduced over a ten-year period. The effect is almost kaleidoscopic, since the individual styles do not progress in a

strict linear series but can be shown to recur simultaneously with others. Even Sabina's hair accessories offer their own complicated sequence (e.g., five different basic types of diadems).

To match Sabina's ever-developing portraits on the Rome coins, Hadrian's regime put a premium on producing conspicuously original reverse images to amplify the empress's imperial virtues. Surprisingly, Sabina is the first empress ever to be explicitly paired with Juno on a Roman coin. Other innovative types include depictions of Venus as both Genetrix ("mother") and Victrix ("victor"), and also (shared with Hadrian) images of a personified Pudicitia ("chastity") and Indulgentia as imperial qualities. A late Sabina reverse with Cybele, in the action pose of riding a lion, is the goddess's first appearance on a Roman imperial issue. Innovations continued even after Sabina received consecration in 137, for she is the first deified emperor or empress to be shown on an imperial coin as she is riding an eagle. All of these numismatic types took on a life of their own in the later coinage—especially that eagle. In shaping imperial self-representation through the later third century, the Sabina coins from the Rome mint represent her most important legacy.

The response to Sabina in the corresponding provincial coinage is harder to assess. The number of mints that take notice of Sabina is massive—over 80 in all, roughly five or six times the number of those that commemorated Plotina. The provincial coins do not bear dedicatory legends, and the reverse types often can be shown to lack significance that is closely personal to Sabina. The distribution seems incidental to the route of the Third Journey. If anything, the pace of production of provincial Sabina coins seems to speed up after the tour's conclusion.

Though cities evidently had substantial discretion on how to represent the empress on their coins, many chose not to do so at all. There were significant parts of the eastern empire that minted at least in some measure for Hadrian but produced nothing for Sabina. Others devoted their numismatic energy rather to the handsome heroized Antinoös, who in some locales received (non-monetary) medals so large and spectacular that contemporaries often reworked and treasured them as wearable art or amulets. In still other cases we can see cities struggling with how to juggle commemorations of Hadrian; Sabina; the presumptive heir (after 136) Lucius Aelius; and Antinoös on their coinage. The Rome mint gave no guidance in the matter, for it wholly excluded Antinoös

from official issues. And there seems to have been at least an unspoken assumption that one could not place a portrait of the Bithynian youth on the same coin as a member of the imperial house. So local communities had to develop their own complex solutions about who got what denominations. Where we can check, Sabina did not inevitably end up on top.

For only a small fraction of the provincial reverses do we see an effort to assimilate the empress's actual features to the figure depicted. The various mints of Anatolia that issued silver cistophoric coins did that in a limited way, soon after her elevation to *Augusta*, including one type that celebrates the start of the Third Journey. Alexandria clearly portrayed Sabina as either Demeter or Eusebeia (Piety, a quality that Balbilla emphasizes in her Memnon poetry) in 130/131, the year of the imperial visit to the city, but not beyond. A few Cilician mints made an effort to syncretize Sabina with Artemis.

We are thankful that the impressive epigraphic record from the east (and to a degree the west) fills out the picture. Overall, Sabina was to receive more public honors and more civic commemorations than any imperial woman had enjoyed since Livia, wife of Augustus. There is much welcome evidence for private dedications, too. Those from the eastern provinces are all the initiative of wealthy individual women, except for a primitive temple at remote Dionysiopolis in southwest Phrygia that one of Sabina's freed slaves set up in her honor. For eastern provincials, the impetus to identify Sabina as "goddess" (*thea*) or with specific goddesses seems to have come only with her naming as *Augusta* in 128. None of the inscriptions that explicitly present Sabina as a manifestation of Hera, Demeter, or Artemis—which are the three principal identifications—lack the epithet *Sebaste*. It does seem that it was not Sabina's personal attributes but rather those of Hadrian that prompted each of these syncretizations. His self-presentation as Zeus (especially pronounced after 128), an Eleusinian initiate (at the highest grade after 124/125), and a hunter (throughout his reign) sufficiently explains honors for Sabina specifically as Hera, Demeter, or Artemis.

No one ever would have questioned the relative hierarchy of emperor and empress in the context of the imperial cult. The travel writer Pausanias reports seeing at Athens "hundreds" of statues of Hadrian in the sanctuary of Olympian Zeus alone. In the 1960s, A. Benjamin was able to count fully 94 altars set up to Hadrian at Athens, and another 170 or so elsewhere, distributed widely in the eastern provinces. Only

two of these Hadrian shared with Sabina (as Hera), at Perinthus and the nearby island of Thasos. In contrast, Sabina gets only a handful of altars to herself, clustered in Lycia and Epirus.¹⁷

One major shift in Sabina's public image came with the visit to Egypt in 130/131 CE. The Alexandrian coinage shows Sabina with hair loose and flowing down to the shoulders; a small square knot seems to crown her forehead. This hair knot eventually becomes a major part of her iconography—in both life and death. It was a multivalent symbol that simultaneously evoked apotropaic power, the insignia of Egyptian queens, the hair fashions of the earliest Julio-Claudian women, and the goddess Aphrodite.

After leaving Egypt, Hadrian and Sabina visited Syria and Anatolia again, then Thrace (and just perhaps some points farther north), with winter at Athens (131/132). It was Athens that saw the ceremonial climax of the entire tour, with Hadrian's formal inauguration of the massive temple of Olympian Zeus, and his foundation of the 'Panhellenion,' a new international league of cities with membership restricted to those thought to be authentically Greek. "Hadrian's construction of a temple of Hera next to that of Zeus Panhellenios in Athens, and the ritual worship of Hadrian as Zeus Olympius and Panhellenios," observes U. Hahn, "allow us to suspect that there was also a cult of Sabina as Hera in Athens."¹⁸ Maybe so. But Athens and Eleusis offer depressingly little documentary evidence on the empress's presence and honors there, on this occasion or on previous visits. The plan in spring 132 was now to return to Rome, and the imperial party seems to have set off westward. But the fierce Bar Kochba revolt necessitated the emperor's return to Judaea, in a severe military emergency that postponed return to the city until early 133.

A second shift in Sabina's image comes with the conclusion of this great eastern journey and the return to Rome. Sabina soon gains an idealizing hairstyle modeled especially on fourth-century BCE representations of Aphrodite and Artemis. Indeed, a strongly classicizing vision informs much of Sabina's later portraiture, which grows in intensity (especially in the sculpture) until her distinctive features practically disappear into Hellenized abstraction. As Sabina grows older in the 130s, her images seem ever more young.

Meanwhile, the record of Sabina's actual activities in the city is mostly a blank. The inscriptions may point toward some (limited) euergetism on the part of the empress, just possibly focused on the

elite women of Rome (the ‘matronae’ in their organized aspect), and certainly on the town of Gabii, near the imperial Villa at Tibur. Some lead pipes, found in Rome in today’s Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II and variously inscribed with the name “Sabina Augusta” and that of her half-sister, “Matidia, daughter of the Augusta.” may suggest the construction of a bath complex—or (tellingly) the establishment of a separate residence outside the imperial quarters on the Palatine.

There is one real and consequential surprise from this era. An obelisk set up originally (it seems) at Tibur with specially composed hieroglyphic text presents Hadrian and Sabina as a unified royal couple, and the youth Antinoös as a new god who serves as a divine intermediary between worlds, and seeks divine blessing from his father Horus for the emperor and empress. There had been nothing like the cult of Antinoös before, and hardly anyone even at the time knew what to make of it—except to support it. But the obelisk shows that Antinoös was the junior partner in a triad, and very much part of a larger project in which Sabina herself seems to have publicly participated. As a symbol of and vehicle for youthful immortality, the figure of Antinoös underlined exactly what the emperor wanted for himself and his wife.

Hadrian seems to have had another project in mind, perhaps not one that Sabina fully understood. There are some disturbing signs that the regime, not long after the final return to Rome, started laying the groundwork for the empress’s death and apotheosis. Most suggestive is the final “reprise” phase of her lifetime coinage at Rome, in which contemporaneous types show the empress modeling four of her five numismatic hairstyles to date. Added to that is the general push of Sabina into extreme classical abstraction in the sculpture, and her wholesale disappearance (after 135/136) from the money of Alexandria, while that of Antinoös continued. In 137/138, where we once would expect to see Sabina commemorated in the coinage of that city, we find instead an arresting and quite novel type—the figure of Pronoia (“providence”), so new that a legend had to identify what was being personified.

Since at least 135, Hadrian had been seriously ailing, and in fits and starts was thinking ahead, finally settling (in the latter half of 136) on the sickly, non-related but handsome L. Ceionius Commodus as a successor (henceforth styled L. Aelius Caesar). Sabina was now an adoptive mother and—since the man had a family—grandmother. The literary sources are absolutely insistent that Hadrian was obsessed with the questions of his longevity (some alleging that Antinoös had even sacrificed

himself in the Nile to prolong it) and subsequent fame. Confirmation is ready at hand. Perhaps as early as 123, and certainly by 130, Hadrian had started building in Rome his huge dynastic Mausoleum on the west bank of the Tiber, with which he clearly meant to outdo Augustus' family tomb in every regard. A bridge to link the monument physically and symbolically to the Campus Martius was already in place by 134.

So we have to at least consider that Hadrian's failing health and the climate of intense political conflict that followed his adoption of Commodus provide a possible context for the death of Sabina in late 137, especially given the emphatic ancient tradition that her husband forced her into suicide. Hadrian may have feared that Sabina might outlive him, and thus potentially upset his arrangements. Perhaps he suspected that Sabina might conspire, say, with the family of his brother-in-law, Servianus, to kill him. Hadrian seems to have studied Flavian family dynamics, and what he found evidently fueled his paranoia. He even published the claim (one assumes in his *Autobiography*) that Titus had poisoned his father, the emperor Vespasian. Furthermore, Marius Maximus asserted that Hadrian dreaded meeting the fate that had befallen Domitian—whose wife, the *Augusta* Domitia Longina, not so recently deceased, had helped assassinate.¹⁹ On the other hand, if Sabina were to die first, her apotheosis, combined with what Antinoös had already received, would have provided a solid foundation for the emperor's own divinization. Deification is obviously something Hadrian craved, in the event of not being able to find a way through magic to live forever. According to this line of ultra-cynical calculation, Sabina surely provided more value to the regime as *diva* than living wife.

Once she was deceased—whether by natural causes, medical mistake, suicide, or in some other way—divinization came naturally to Sabina. After all, the empress had been “branded” (to use the modern term) as a *diva*-designate for at least a full quarter-century, with the campaign taking flight with her dramatic elevation to *Augusta*, and accelerating yet again from the time of the sojourn in Egypt. The Senate must have voted Sabina the honor before the spiraling set of events that included the death of L. Aelius Caesar (1 January 138), Hadrian's designation of the consular Antoninus to replace him, the brutal elimination of his own grandnephew Pedanius Fuscus and the young man's 90-year-old grandfather Servianus (perceived to stand in opposition to the new adoption), and of course the death of Hadrian himself at the

coastal resort of Baiae on 10 July. The contemporary Arco di Portogallo relief aims to capture the moment that Hadrian upon his wife's cremation publicly swore to her apotheosis. There an enormous seated Hadrian gestures toward the figure of his airborne wife, in transit to the heavens, rendered at half his size. More than anything, this depiction of Sabina's apotheosis focuses on Hadrian, and reflects the emperor's central aspirations for himself.

Hadrian during his lifetime designated a precinct in the Forum of Julius Caesar at Rome for future dedications to the deified Sabina. Then there are the spectacular post-consecration coins that he minted for his wife, issued in eight types with two distinct reverse designs, and which introduced two yet unseen hairstyles. So the tweaking of Sabina's public image still continued. When Hadrian himself died, according to the *Historia Augusta* he was "hated by all"—certainly by the senatorial class, who bitterly resented how his principate had suppressed dissent by murder at both its beginning and end. So strong was the Senate's sentiment against Hadrian that his successor, Antoninus, could not even bring his corpse back to Rome. Rather, he had him buried for more than a year at Puteoli. We do not know where Sabina was interred in the interim: perhaps in the new Mausoleum, still incomplete, but very likely elsewhere at Rome.

The Senate's open hostility toward Hadrian must have quashed much of its good will toward the memory of Sabina, whose cult never really took root in Italy. Antoninus did manage to complete his predecessor's grandiose Mausoleum on the Tiber, but at the time of its dedication in late 139 the Senate had not yet relented in allowing the deceased emperor the same divine honors as his wife.

What absolutely sealed the fate of the divine Sabina, at least in the popular imagination, was the fact that Antoninus Pius was to lose his own wife, Faustina I, barely two years after accession, in October 140. Her funeral and deification, commemorative post-consecration coinage, and the Senate's vote of precious-metal display statues, circus games, dedicated priestesses, and above all her husband's construction of a grand temple on one of the best pieces of real estate in the Roman Forum made most people quickly forget whatever Hadrian had done for his wife not quite three years previous.²⁰ Yet these very honors show that Antoninus observed and approved how Hadrian had promoted Sabina, and in doing so had initiated a new trajectory for the concept of empress.

APPENDIX 1

Sabina on the Coins of Rome

This chart simplifies and adapts that offered by Abdy 2014, 80–81, which shows his provisional arrangement of the Rome coins portraying Sabina. Basic references follow, in the first instance to numbered items in *RIC II* (Hadrian) as available; then Strack (II) 1933, then (if needed) other catalogues or collections. For clarity, Sabina appears as the obverse in double obverse types (i.e., Sabina/Hadrian). The group numbers are those of Abdy (in turn modifying those of Mattingly in *BM Coins, Rom. Emp. III*), but the use of letters to denote subgroups and Roman numerals to mark hair styles is mine. The number of types indicated for each subgroup should be taken as a minimum—variants will continue to emerge—meant to suggest the relative extent of each phase of coining. I warmly thank R. Abdy for sharing his Sabina notes for the new edition of *RIC II*, which I have used in places for the preparation of this chart.

GROUP	OBV LEGEND	HAIRSTYLE	REVERSES	NOTES
(o)	SABINA AVGVSTA	Hair up, braided— stephane (i)	HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS (of a type used 124/ 125)	?124/125–127.?Mint of Rome? Or of Asia Minor. Denarius.
1	SABINA AVGVSTA IMP HADRIANI AVG	Hair up, braided— stephane (i)	Anepigraphic with seated Ceres and Vesta	128 (early), probably just prior to P P. Total types = 4. Sestertii and dupondii/asses only.

GROUP	OBV LEGEND	HAIRSTYLE	REVERSES	NOTES
2	SABINA AVGVSTA IMP HADRIANI AVG P P	Hair up, braided— double stephane (i)	Anepigraphic with seated Ceres and Vesta	128 (later), probably just post P P. Types = 2. Aurei only.
3A	SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG P P	Hair up, braided— double stephane (i)	Anepigraphic (sometimes with SC in exergue) with seated Ceres, Vesta and Concordia, also standing Venus Victrix, Pudicitia-Pietas	128–ca. 130 (visit to Egypt). Types = 17. All denominations.
3B	SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG P P	Hair gathered in knot at nape; laureate (ii)	Anepigraphic with seated Ceres	130/131. Types = 1 (shared with 3A). Denarius and quinarius.
4A	SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG P P	Hair up, braided— double stephane (i)	Descriptive reverses with standing Venus Genetrix, seated and standing Concordia Augusta; on medallc dupondii, with HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS or HADRIANVS AVG COS III P P and bust of emperor	Ca. 130/131–135. Types = 6 (all shared with other subgroups, variously 4B, 4D. 4E). No aurei or quinarii.
4B	SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG P P	Hair gathered in knot at nape; laureate (ii)	Descriptive reverses with Concordia Augusta; also HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS and bust of emperor	Ca. 130/131–135. Types = 2 (each shared with 4C and 4D). Sestertii and dupondii/asses only.
4C	SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG P P	Laureate; hair gathered in queue (+ hair covering stephane) (iii)	Descriptive reverses with seated Vesta, and Concordia Augusta, also standing Pietas, Pudicitia, Juno	Ca. 130/131–135. LTypes = 7 (all shared, variously with 4B and 4D). One denarius, the rest sestertii and dupondii/asses.

GROUP	OBV LEGEND	HAIRSTYLE	REVERSES	NOTES
4D	SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG P P	Diademed; hair gathered in queue (plus hair covering stephane) (iv)	Descriptive reverses with seated Vesta and Pietas Augusta, seated and standing Concordia Augusta and Pudicitia, Juno Regina, Venus Genetrix, Indulgentia, HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS or HADRIANVS AVG COS III P P and bust of emperor; also anepigraphic seated Vesta (quinarii only), peacock (quinarii only), and standing Ceres (sestertii)	Ca. 130/131–135. Types = 40 (11 shared, variously with 4A, 4B, 4C). The largest group in terms of types, with all denominations.
4E	SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG P P	Second hair-up style (looser twist, no braid, no fringe); uncovered single stephane = “Aphrodite” type (v)	Descriptive reverses with seated and standing Concordia Augusta, standing Pietas Augusta and Venus Genetrix	Ca. 135. Types = 6. Sestertii and dupondii/asses only.
4F	SABINA AVGVSTA	Second hair-up style (looser twist, no braid, no fringe); uncovered single stephane = “Aphrodite” type (v)	descriptive reverses with seated Vesta, seated and standing Concordia Augusta, standing Juno Regina	Ca. 135. Types = 4. Aurei and denarii only

GROUP	OBV LEGEND	HAIRSTYLE	REVERSES	NOTES
4G	SABINA AVGVSTA	First hair-up style (i) OR hair gathered in knot and nape (ii) OR queue and diadem (+hair covering stephane) (iv) OR second hair-up style (v)	Descriptive reverses with seated Vesta, seated and standing Concordia Augusta and Victoria Augusta, also standing Juno Regina, Pietas Augusta, Venus Genetrix, and Libertas Publica; anepigraphic with Cybele riding lion; also HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS and bust of emperor	Ca. 135–137 (death). Types = 23. Hairstyle (i) confined to dupondii/asses and denarii; (ii) to a sestertius with (anepigraphic) Cybele.
5A	DIVA AVGVSTA SABINA or DIVA AVG SABINA	Veiled; grain-wreath with hair gathered at nape (vi)	Descriptive CONSECRATIO reverse with divinization theme: eagle on scepter, or Sabina holding scepter while riding on flying eagle	137/138 (posthumous). Revival of earlier hairstyle (ii) with addition of veil; main queue style avoided. Types = 7. Aurei, denarii, sestertii (no dupondii/asses).
5B	DIVA AVG SABINA	Veiled; grain wreath with hair gathered at nape (vi), sometimes with stephane (vii) OR unveiled; unbraided hair up, single stephane (v)	Descriptive reverse (PIETATI AVG) with altar over ustrinum (site of pyre)	137/138 (posthumous). Revival of two earlier hairstyles (ii and v) with main queue style avoided. Types = 1. Denarii only

References

GROUP (o)

BM Coins, Rom. Emp. III 374 no. 1029 (Sabina/Hadrian)

GROUP 1

Strack 856–857 (Ceres, Vesta)

GROUP 2

RIC 416 (Ceres); Strack 359 (Vesta)

GROUP 3A

RIC 409, 411a, 1019, 1023, Strack 859 (Ceres seated); *RIC* 408, 413a–c, 1020, 1024, 1044 (Vesta seated); *RIC* 414 (Concordia seated); *RIC* 412 (Venus Victrix standing); *RIC* 415 (Pudicitia-Pietas standing)

GROUP 3B

RIC 411b (Ceres seated)

GROUP 4A

RIC 1035 (Venus Genetrix standing); *RIC* 390, 398, 1017, 1047 (Concordia Augusta seated and standing); Strack 845–846, 848, 850, cf. *RIC* 981–982, 984 (emperor)

GROUP 4B

RIC 414, 1025, 1037 (Concordia Augusta seated); Strack 848, 850, cf. *RIC* 982 (emperor)

GROUP 4C

RIC 1046 (Vesta seated); *RIC* 1025 and 1037 (Concordia Augusta seated); *RIC* 1029 and 1039 (Pietas standing); *RIC* 1032 (Pudicitia standing); *RIC* 401 and 1038 (Juno standing)

GROUP 4D

RIC 397a and b, 410, 1036, 1046 (Vesta seated); *RIC* 405, 1029, 1039 (Pietas Augusta seated); *RIC* 390–393, 398, 400, 1021, 1025, 1037, Strack 366 (Concordia Augusta seated and standing); *RIC* 406–407, 1032–1033, 1042, Strack 374 (Pudicitia seated and standing); *RIC* 394–395a, 401a–c, 404, 1028, 1038 (Juno Regina standing); *RIC* 396, Strack

381 (Venus Genetrix standing); *RIC* 417 (Indulgentia standing); *RIC* 981–985, Strack 845–847, 851–853 (emperor); Strack 364, cf. *RIC* 413a (Vesta seated anepigraphic); Strack 365 (peacock anepigraphic); British Museum inv. 1984.0902.1 (Ceres standing anepigraphic)

GROUP 4E

RIC 1018, 1026, Strack 863 (Concordia seated and standing); Strack 867 (Pietas Augusta standing); Strack 870 (Venus Genetrix standing)

GROUP 4F

RIC 397a–b (Vesta seated); *RIC* 390–393 (Concordia Augusta seated and standing); *RIC* 395a–b (Juno Regina standing)

GROUP 4G

RIC 397a–b, Strack 382 (Vesta seated); *RIC* 390–393, 1047, Strack 368var. (Concordia Augusta seated and standing); Specimen at Ashmolean, Oxford; cf. (for reverse) Strack 281 (Victoria Augusta seated); Münzhandlung Basel *Vente publique* no. 6, 18 March 1936, cf. (for reverse) Strack 280 (Victoria Augusta standing); *RIC* 394, 395a–b (Juno Regina standing); *RIC* 1048 (Pietas Augusta standing); *RIC* 396, 1049–1050, Strack 381 (Venus Genetrix standing); American Numismatic Society 1953.151.2, cf. (for reverse) Strack 376 (Libertas Publica standing); Strack 499a (Cybele riding lion anepigraphic); *RIC* 978–980, Strack 845–848, 850–853 (emperor)

GROUP 5A

RIC 1052 and Strack 878 (standing eagle); *RIC* 418a–b, 419, 1051 (Sabina on flying eagle)

GROUP 5B

RIC 422a–c (altar)

APPENDIX 2

Sculptural Portraits of Sabina

I offer here a chart showing a selection of about 60 of the objects that seem especially relevant for our study, with particular reference to the work of Carandini and Wegner, and that of the scholars assembled by Adembri and Nicolai for the 2007 exhibition focused on Sabina's portraiture. Objects are identified by the prefix C (= Carandini number) or N (= not in Carandini, my number).

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
C1/10–12	127/ 130–131	Italia: Ostia (augural college)/Ostia (Museum)	Statue (Venus Genetrix type)	I/—	Carandini suggests the date “ca. 113,” and adduces similarities of features with (especially) C65 and C66 (portraits of divinized Sabina also from Ostia). Wegner (1956, 127, again at 1984, 150) rejects the identification. See further Wood 2015, 243 with n. 47 (hair is unparalleled on Sabina’s coins); Adembri 2007, 78–79 (accepting identification, and offering a date as late as ca. 128).
C3/16–18	130131/—	Gallia Narbonensis: Vasio Vocontiorum (theater, excavated in 1913)/Vaison (Musée Municipal)	Statue (somewhat over life size)	II/—	Found with an idealizing statue of Hadrian. Caenaro (2010, 20 n. 2) sees assimilation to Pudicitia. Hair in the style of Matidia I. Eyes are (unexpectedly, for the date) incised. Wegner 1956, 131 associates with travels in Gaul in 121; Carandini assigns to the “first months of 122.”
C4/19–20	130/—	Hispania Baetica: Italica/ Seville (Museo Arqueologico Provincial)	Head	II/—	Similar to C3 (Vaison): Wegner 1956, 130 and 1984, 154; also Carandini, who assigns it to his series IV (ca. 121–ca. 125), and specifically dates to “Hadrian’s visit to Spain ca. 122–123”; L. Buccino ap. Adembri and Nicolai 2007, 149.

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
C5/29	—/ 154–157	Africa Proconsularis: Carthage, found in 1874 SE of forum (?Serapaeum), with retrieval from 1875 transport shipwreck in 1995/Paris (Louvre)	Statue	III/—	Carandini assigns to ca. 121–ca. 125. Adembri 2007, 77 groups hairstyle with C3 , C17 , also C37 and N103 . Wegner 1984, 148 rejects identification (but from 19th-century drawing).
C13/42–46	—/—	Numidia: Lambaesis/ Lambaesis (Musée Municipal)	Statue (Small Hercu- laneum type)	II/—	Carandini compares C15 , and assigns the statue to ca. 121–ca. 125. Wegner 1984, 148 considers identification less than certain.
C15/47–49	—/—	Cyrenaica: Cyrene (Central Valley, Temple B)/Cyrene (Museum)	Statue	II/—	Found in context of statues also of Trajan, Hadrian, and Caracalla. Carandini finds the portrait similar to C17 , and assigns it to ca. 121–ca. 125. Wegner 1984, 148 doubts the identification.
C17/52–53	126/ 158–159	Italia: ?Ostia (Baths of Marciana)/ Copenhagen (Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek)	Head (colossal)	II/—	Carandini adduces similarities with C1 , C3 , C65 and assigns to ca. 125–ca. 128. Wegner (1956, 126 and 1984, 148) finds similarities with the head of C3 but does not consider the identification certain; considers C22 a “replica” of superior quality. Adembri 2007, 77 compares hairstyle of portrait closely to C3 .

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
C22/ 61, 63, 65	127/—	—/Ex-Rome art market (1950), then Malmö (Malmström Collection)	Head	II/—	Carandini notes hairstyle is the same as C3 and others (including C4 , C15 , C17); views this as a transitional piece of ca. 125–ca. 128. Wegner (1956, 127) initially considered it a “replica” of C17 ; later (1984, 149) he expressed doubts on both. L. Buccino (ap. Adembri and Nicolai 2007, 149) compares portrait to C3 .
C24/ 90–99	—/—	(?) Villa Adriana/ Rome (private collection)	Head	VA1/(i)	Wegner 1984, 153–154 notes similarity of hair to <i>RIC</i> II (Hadrian) 1017ff (cf. Adembri 2007, 77), but on basis of facial features disagrees with Carandini’s view that this is Sabina as a new ‘Augusta’ in 128. Carandini assigns this more generally to ca. 125–ca. 128.
C27/ 110–112	126 /—	—/Athens (National Museum)	Head	VB/—	Carandini places in his series VI (ca. 128–ca. 131/132). Wegner 1956, 126 comments on clear Greek influence.
C28/ 144	—/—	Lycia: Myra/ Andriace (Horrea of Hadrian)	Protome: portico with paired busts.	VB(?) /—	Inscription: Degrassi, <i>ILS</i> 5908. Portraits now lost; Carandini compares to C27 on basis of 1803 drawing, and assigns to ca. 128–ca. 131/132.

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
C29 /138–139, 143	—/—	Pamphylia: Perge (found 1955 near monumental arch at city gate)/Antalya (museum)	Statue (Large Herculanum type) + head	VB/—	Carandini adduces bilingual inscriptions found nearby, ‘Sabinae August[ae]’ (<i>IK</i> Perge 99) and to Hadrian (<i>IK</i> Perge 94 and 95, as <i>tr. pot.</i> V = 121/122), but still assigns to ca. 129. Wegner 1984, 146 is uncertain on identification.
C35 /173, 175	—/ 166–167	Italia: Tibur (Villa Hadriana)/ Rome (Museo Nazionale = Palazzo Massimo)	Head	VA2/(v) (cf.)	Carandini places in years ca. 131/132–ca. 133/134. The identification is not universally accepted: see B. Adembri ap. Adembri and Nicolai 2007, 174. Wegner 1984, 152 rejects. Cirio 2011, 141–148 suggests that this youthful portrait represents Julia Balbilla.
C37 /172	—/—	Italia: Tibur (Villa Hadriana)/ Rouen (Musée Département des Antiquités)	Head (on mismatched bust)	II (front) + VA3 (back)/—	Carandini: a “composite hairstyle” with the back portion similar to C35 ; compares style of portrait to C54 , and places it ca. 131/132–ca. 133/134. Cf. also N110 . Adembri 2007, 77 groups with C3 , C17 , also N103 .
C38 /186–188	128/ 116–117	—/Rome (Museo Capitolino)	Head	VI/(ii)	Hair in the style of Plotina (Carandini, Adembri 2007, 77–78, 149). Identification doubted by Wegner (1956, 128 and 1984, 151) and others (on whom see Carandini, who, however, views it as a transitional piece of ca. 131/2–ca. 133/4.

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
C39/ 189–191	128/ 136–137	Rome (Esquiline, Via Carlo Alberto)/ Rome (Museo Conservatori)	Bust	VI/(ii)	Found with a head of Hadrian, ascribed to 127–128. Carandini places it in years ca. 134–ca. 137, and views it as a turning -point in idealizing abstraction of Sabina. Wegner (1956, 128 and 1984, 152) deems it “probably late Hadrianic.” Caenaro (2010, 21 n. 8) sees assimilation with Artemis.
C40/ 199–200	130/—	—/Rome (Villa Medici)	Head (on mismatched statue)	IVC/(iii)	Wegner (1956, 130 and 1984, 154) considers identification “highly probable.” Carandini assigns to ca. 134–ca. 137.
C42/ 206–207	129/ 140–141	Rome (Via Appia)/ Rome (Museo Nazionale)	Bust; head with diadem	VA3a/—	Parian marble. Wegner (1956, 129 and 1984, 152) compares to C55 . Carandini highlights similarities with C39 , and with SABINA AVGVSTA (with second “hair-up” portrait) <i>aurei</i> struck at Rome, and assigns to ca. 134–ca. 137. Caenaro (2010, 21 n. 12) sees assimilation to Juno.
C43/ 208–209	129/—	Rome (?Tiber bed)/Rome (Museo Nazionale)	Head with diadem	VA3a/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137, indeed, “in the vicinity of 135.” Wegner 1984, 152 compares to C55 (!).
C44/ 212–214	—/—	Asia Minor (unknown)/ ex-J. J. Klejman Gallery (New York), now Berlin (Charlottenburg)	Head	VA3a/—	Carandini assigns to his series VIII A (ca. 134–ca. 137). Eyes not engraved. Wegner 1984, 146 compares to C43 .

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
C45/ 210–211	127/—	Italia: Tibur (Villa Hadriana)/ex- Margam Park (sold ca. 1959)	Head with diadem	VA3a/—	Found with a head of Hadrian at Tivoli. Carandini stresses idealizing approach, and dates to ca. 134–ca. 137. Wegner (1956, 127 and 1984, 150) and Carandini compare to C42 .
C46/ 218–220	—/—	Italia: Herdonia (Ordonia)/ Fossombrone (Casa Museo Quadreria Cesarini)	Head with diadem	VA3a/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137, and remarks on strong Hellenizing influence. Wegner 1984, 147 finds the identification “believable”; compares to C55 .
C47/ 222–223	128/ 132–135	Italia: Gabii (‘Augusteum,’ found before 1807)/Paris (Louvre)	Head (on mismatched statue of ‘Abundantia’)	VA3a/—	Wegner (1956, 128 and 1984, 151) and Carandini compare to C42 . Carandini assigns to ca. 134–ca. 137. Adembri 2007, 79 dates to 134–136, and describes hairstyle as based on those of the 4th century BCE worn by Aphrodite or Artemis.
C48/ 215–217	126/—	—/Florence (Museo Archeologico)	Miniature bust (sculpted from the gem aquamarine)	VA3a/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137.
C49/221	130/—	Villa Chiragan (Martres Tolosane, France, found 1826–1830)/ Toulouse (Musée Saint-Raymond)	Bust with diadem	VA3a/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137. Wegner (1956, 130 and 1984, 155) compares to C55 . Caenaro (2010, 20 n. 6): “Artemis.”

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
C50/ 224–225	127/—	—/Mantova (Palazzo Ducale)	Head with diadem (on modern bust)	VA3a/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137. Heavily reworked. Wegner (1956, 127 and 1984, 149) compares to C55 .
C51/ 226–227	—/—	—/Malibu (Getty Museum)	Bust with diadem	VA3a/—	Wegner 1984, 149 rejects identification; Carandini (judging from photographs) is tentative, but assigns to ca. 134–ca. 137. Caenaro (2010, 20 n. 13) sees the crescent in hair as an attribute of Artemis.
C52 bis/ 273–275	—/—	Gallia Belgica: Augusta Treverorum (baths)/Trier (Rheinisches Landesmuseum)	Head with diadem	VA3a/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137. Wegner 1984, 155 deems identification “probable.”
C53/ 231–232	128/ 144–145	Ostia/Ostia (Museum)	Head with hairband	VA3b/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137. Wegner (1956, 231 and 1984, 150–151) compares to C55 .
C54/ 233–234	126–127/ 173 (cf.)	Rome (“terre Martinetti”)/Copenhagen (Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek)	Head with diadem	VA3b/—	Carandini compares to C39 , dates it to ca. 134–ca. 137, but “no later than 135”; Wegner 1984, 148 compares to C55 .
C55/ 235–236	129/—	Lanuvium (Villa of Antoninus Pius)/Vatican City (Musei Vaticani)	Bust; head with hairband	VA3b/—	Found with portraits of family of Marcus Aurelius; parallels to this type are abundant. Wegner (1956, 129) considers it late in the series. Carandini sees here an “extreme ideal of Panhellenism,” and assigns it to ca. 134–ca. 137.

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
C56/ 237–238	127/—	—/Madrid (Prado)	Head (on mismatched bust)	VA3b/—	Wegner 1984, 149 compares to C55 ; Carandini views it as replica of the same, and assigns it to ca. 134–ca. 137).
C57/ 239–240	128/—	—/Rome (Museo Capitolino)	Head with hairband	VA3b/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137. Wegner (1956, 128 and 1984, 151) compares to C55 .
C58/242	129/—	—/Vatican City (Musei Vaticani Chiaramonti)	Head with hairband (on modern bust)	VA3b/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137; traces of yellow in the hair. Wegner (1956, 129 and 1984, 147) and Carandini compare to C55 .
C59/ 244–245	126/142	—/ex-Rome (Villa Medici); now Florence (Uffizi)	Head with hairband (on modern bust)	VA3b/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137. Wegner 1984, 147 and Carandini compare to C55 .
C60/241	126/—	?Frascati/Berlin (Altes Museum)	Head with hairband (on statue of worshipper)	VA3b/—	Carandini dates to ca. 134–ca. 137. Wegner 1984, 146 and Carandini compare to C55 .
C61/243	128–129/ —	—/Rome (Museo Capitolino)	Head (fragment) with hairband	VA3b/—	Carandini series VIII B (ca. 134–ca. 137). Wegner (1956, 129 and 1984, 152) and Carandini compare to C55 .
C63/ 258–259	129/—	Rome (site of Vittoriano)/ Rome (Museo Nazionale delle Terme)	Head with diadem and veil	VIIa/(vii)	Some polychromy. Carandini sees parallels in C42 , C43 , assigns to ca. 137–ca. 139. Wegner (1984, 152; cf. 1956, 129) compares to C55 , identifies figure as ‘Diva Sabina.’

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
C64/ 266–267	128/ 176–177	Rome (former Arco di Portogallo on Via del Corso)/ Rome (Museo Conservatori)	Relief (apotheosis of Sabina); head with diadem and veil	VIIa/(vii) (cf.)	Wegner 1984, 152, and Carandini (who dates to ca. 137–ca. 139) compare head to C42 . Adembri 2007, 82 finds hairstyle unparalleled on the coins.
C65/ 263–265	127–128/ 120–121	Italia: Ostia (Palace of the Baths of Neptune)/Ostia (Museum)	Statue (Ceres type); head with hairband, covered	VIIb/(vi)	Wegner (1956, 128 and 1984, 150) compares to (veiled) C63 ; Carandini to C1 , also from Ostia, and assigns to ca. 137–ca. 139. Find spot is late Hadrianic/early Antonine building; the base is large enough to accommodate two statues.
C66/ 260–262	—/—	Italia: Ostia (theater)/Ostia (Museum)	Upper part of a statue (Ceres type); veiled head	VIIc/(vi)	Carandini sees assimilation to Artemis-Hera as well as Ceres, and assigns to ca. 137–ca. 139.
C68bis/ —	—/—	Asia Minor: Ephesus (from honorary monument)/ Vienna (Ephesus Museum)	Lower part of statue (relief)	—/—	Carandini sees assimilation to Demeter, and assigns date “ca. 140 (?)” Wegner 1984, 156 rejects identification.
C69/ 270, 272	—/—	Achaea: Olympia (Nyphaeum of Herodes Atticus)/ Olympia (Museum)	Upper part of a statue (fragment, lacking face)	VA4/—	Carandini assigns to ca. 137–ca. 139. Wegner 1984, 150: identification only “possible.”
C p. 199 no. 1 (N102)	—/ 164–165	?/Torino (Museo Archeologico)	Head (on mismatched bust)	[VIIa]/ (vii)	Adembri and Nicolai compare portrait to N107 and (apparently) C35 , and hairstyle to (consecration issue) <i>RIC</i> II (Hadrian) 420a. Cf. Wegner 1984, 155 (no judgment).

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
C p. 201 n. 30 (N101)	—/ 162–163	Italia: Lucus Feroniae (found 1965, at Villa of the gens Volusia)/ Fiano Romano (Museum)	Head with diadem; veiled	[II]/—	Adembri and Nicolai compare to C ₃ . Identification rejected by Wegner 1984, 149.
N103	—/ 146–153	?/Florence (Palazzo Medici-Riccardi)	Bust	[II]/—	L. Buccino (ap. Adembri and Nicolai) compares portrait to C ₃ , C ₄ , C ₁₇ , and C ₂₂ , and hairstyle to Marciana and Matidia I; dates (somewhat boldly) between 118 and 121. Adembri 2007, 77 compares the hairstyle here and of C ₃₇ to that of C ₃ and C ₁₇ .
N104	—/—	Italia: Sessa Aurunca (theater)/ Sessa Aurunca (Castello Ducale)	Bust (life-size); unveiled head.	[VIIa]/ (vii)	Wood 2015, 238–239, 242, 255: “probably posthumous but based on a prototype of no later than 128–136 CE”; compares hairstyle to C ₆₄ .
N105	—/—	—/Grumento (Museum)	Head (veiled)	[VIIa]/ (vii)	Caenaro 2010, 20–21 n. 16 compares to C ₆₃ , C p. 201 n. 30, and N104 .
N106	—/ 126–129	Italia: Otricoli/ Musei Vaticani (Pio Clementino)	statue (‘Fréjus’ Aphrodite type, with modern head)	—/—	G. Spinola (ap. Adembri and Nicolai) views Sabina as merely “plausible,” in light of C ₁ .
N107	—/ 110–115	Italia: ?Tibur (?Villa Adriana)/ ex-Boston Museum of Fine Arts; now Villa Adriana (Antiquarium)	Statue (Large Hercula-neum); veiled head	[VIIa]/ (vii)	Adembri and Nicolai compare portrait to C p. 199 n. 1, hairstyle to RIC II (Hadrian) 420, and clothing to C ₂₉ ; view it as an image of the deified Sabina. Wegner 1984, 146 rejects identification.

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
N108	—/ 138–139	Italia: Tibur (Villa Hadriana, Piazza d’Oro)/ Villa Adriana (Antiquarium)	Statue (acephalous; Hera of Ephesus type)	—/—	Lower portion of mantle shows similarities with that of C5 .
N109	—/ 168–171	Italia: Tibur (Villa Hadriana, Piazza d’Oro)/ Villa Adriana (Antiquarium)	Head (veiled)	[VA2]/(v)	A. M. Reggiani (ap. Adembri and Nicolai) remarks on the idealizing youthfulness of the face, compares hair to C35 , and assigns to consecration series. Adembri 2007, 82 observes that the hairstyle correlates with the “second hair-up” style found on some of Sabina’s later lifetime coin issues.
N110	—/ 166–167	Italia: Tibur (Villa Hadriana)/ Rome (Museo Nazionale)	Head (fragmentary)	[VIIa]/(vii)	C. Marino (ap. Adembri and Nicolai) finds the portrait similar to C37 , and compares hairstyle to <i>RIC</i> II (Hadrian) 420, C p. 199 n. 1 and N107 .
N111	—/ 174–175	Italia: Tibur (Villa Hadriana)/ Villa Adriana (Antiquarium)	Head in relief (fragmentary, lacking most of face)	[VA2]/(v) (cf.)	Adembri compares hairstyle to C35 , also C22 .
N112	—/—	—/ex-Pietro Stettiner = Sotheby’s (2012 sale) = Phoenix Ancient Art (2014 sale)	Bust	[II?]/—	See Matheson 1992, 89–90: “essentially identical” to N113 .

Carandini Number/ Figure	Wegner 1956/ Adembri and Nicolai 2007 Catalog (Pages)	Locations	Description	Hairstyle: Carandini/ ABDY	Notes
N113	—/—	—/New Haven (Yale University Art Gallery)	Bust	[II?]/—	See N112 above. Matheson 1992 finds elements of the hairstyle in C1, C3, and (especially) C22, but overall sees no close sculptural or numismatic parallel, and so suggests it may show Avidia, mother of Lucius Verus (161–169).
N114	—/—	Italia: Syracusa (Viale Cadorna, found 1972)/ Syracuse (Museum)	Bust with diadem	[VA3ab]/—	Wegner 1984, 154 compares to C55.
N115	—/—	Africa Proconsularis: Bulla Regia/ Tunis (Musée Alaoui au Bardo)	Statue (Ceres type, with torch)	[VB]/—	See Kruse 1975, 351–353, 488 no. D 49. Accepted by Wegner 1984, 154.

Notes

Introduction

1. Carandini 1969, 203–205 collects the literary sources summarized below. With ample spacing and margins they supply a page and half of text.
2. Beard 2013, 171.
3. Højte 2009.
4. Chaniotis 2003.
5. For Avitta Bibba, see Chapter 4. Prusias ad Hypium: Carandini 1969, 215–216 no. 50.
6. Abdy 2014, 73. For quantification of this development, see Duncan-Jones 2006.
7. Thanks to the efforts of H. Mattingly and E. A. Sydenham (*RIC* II, 1926), P. L. Strack (1931–1933), and Mattingly again (*BM Coins, Rom. Emp.* III, 1936). For an overview of the coins, see Beckmann 2012.
8. See Carandini 1969, 71–73, 78–85, 114–115, 119–123 (especially 120–121), 232–234, 425–429.
9. See Alexandridis 2004, 104–108 (contrasting the Julio-Claudian period); Hemelrijk 2015, 313–323.
10. On the cultural meanings of these types of Roman public statuary, see Fejfer 2008 and Trimble 2011, and, more generally, the review-discussion of Borg 2012.
11. Abdy 2014, 73–91, with 73 for the quotation.
12. See in general Lapatin 2015, 107–128, with illustrations at 129–170.
13. Carandini 1969, 111–131. On cameos of Sabina, see Megow 1987, 265–266; cf. 226 (adding no new certain items to those collected by Carandini).
14. *HA Hadr.* 11.3.
15. Gregorovius 1898, 175–176; Bieber 1968, 16.
16. Gray 1919, 171.

Chapter 1

1. In general on this matter, see Kuhoff 1993.
2. For a sketch of women's political power in the later Republic, see Brennan 2012; on the commemoration of elite Roman women in the eastern provinces, Kajava 1990.

3. Octavian's honors to his wife and sister: Dio Cass. 49.38.1 with Purcell 1986, 85–87. Rome's most important priestesses, the six Vestal Virgins, enjoyed a similar sacrosanct status: see Wildfang 2006.

4. See especially Tac. *Ann.* 1.2, Aug. *RG* 34.1, and (for the vote of name) Suet. *Aug.* 7.2; for the *augustum augurium* that attended Romulus' foundation of Rome, see Enn. *Ann.* F 155 Skutsch.

5. See Saller 1984, 348–349.

6. For a contemporary appreciation of the splendor of the Mausoleum and its surroundings, see Strabo 5.3.8; also Suet. *Aug.* 100.4, who dates its completion and the opening of the surrounding park to 28 BCE. More generally, see Lott 2012, 9.

7. Ridley 1987, 385–391 offers a documented summary of the most important steps in the formation of Augustus' ruler cult.

8. Alföldi 1971, with 122–124 for the link with Jupiter.

9. See Aug. *RG* 35.1 (emphatic end position in the *Res Gestae*) and Suet. *Aug.* 58, also Dio Cass. 55.10.10, and (for the date) *Inscr. Ital.* XIII 2 118–119, all with Swan 2004, 103–104.

10. For what follows, see especially the concise formulations of Plin. *HN* 7.149–150; Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.

11. The name *Augustus* as inheritable: Suet. *Tib.* 17.2. For the phrase *domus Augusta*, first found in Ovid in 8 CE, see Flory 1996, 293 with n. 23, and more generally Flory 1997, 115–122.

12. See Flory 1996, 292.

13. Suet. *Aug.* 100.3–4.

14. Dio Cass. 56.42.3 with Swan 2004, 353; cf. (for a list of Roman deifications) Palombi 2014. The *Fasti Amiterni* (*II* XIII 2 25) gives the date of this *consecratio*.

15. For Livia's role, see Dio Cass. 56.42.4; 46.2–4. On the rapid acceptance of the imperial *domus* as “divine,” see Hekster 2015, 176–177.

16. Flory 1997, 118. For a roster of grants of the title *Augusta* from Livia (14 CE) to Theodora (in the year 548), see Kolb 2010a, 23–35.

17. See Flory 1997, 122–129, and also Wood 2000, 84.

18. Flory 1997, 130.

19. Sources in Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 319–321 no. 367 (Flavia Domitilla, wife of Vespasian), 321–322 no. 368 (their daughter); see Wood 2010 for the case that the *Diva Augusta* was Vespasian's deceased wife.

20. On Domitia Longina (born ca. 51–55 CE), see Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 287–288, no. 327 with Varner 1995, 203–205. Note *CIL* XV 554 (her brickstamps from 126, on which see Chausson and Buonopane 2010, 101–102) and XIV 2795 (she was dead by 140, and never lost the title *Augusta*).

21. E. Dürr in RAC XIX (2001) s.v. Kaiserin coll. 1057–1076 offers the best overview of how the role of “empress” developed; also (concisely) Temporini-Gräfin Vitzthum 2006. For the institutional aspects, see Bauman 1992. On Livia herself described as *princeps*, see [Ovid] *Consolatio ad Liviam* 303 and 356, with Jenkins 2009; see also Ov. *Tr.* 3.1.125.

22. See Purcell 1986 on the events of 9 BCE, especially 92–93 for the dedication of the Ara Pacis, on which see also McAuley 2015, 46–49. Livia was granted the “right of three children”: Dio Cass. 55.2.5–7; cf. 56.10.2.

23. See Strabo 5.3.8 on the Porticus Liviae, and in general, on Livia's assertive benefactions and building, Boatwright 1991, 519–520; also E. Dürr in RAC XIX (2001) s.v. Kaiserin coll. 1063–1065, and Hemelrijk 2015, 181–182. Livia may be represented as the

goddess Pax (= Peace) on the reverse of *RIC* I (Augustus) 220, issued late in Augustus' reign (13–14 CE), with the type continuing under Tiberius.

24. See Suet. *Tib.* 51.2 with *Claud.* 11.2 and the discussion of Ginsburg 2005, 64–65.

25. Sources: L. Ollendorf in *RE* XIII (1927) s.v. Livius 37 (Livia Drusilla) coll. 900–924. For her benefactions and honors, see especially Dio Cass. 56.46.2 and 5; Joseph. *AJ* 19.75–90 with Swan 2004, 357.

26. Coins (exclusively in bronze): *RIC* I (Tiberius) 50 and 51 (illustrating her right to wheeled transport in the city of Rome), and 47 (*SALVS AVGVSTA*). On Livia's illness, see especially Tac. *Ann.* 3.64 with Rawson 2005. On Agrippina the Younger (died 33 CE), see *RIC* I (Claudius) 80, minted after she received the grant of *Augusta* in 50; cf. *RIC* I (Gaius) 55, a posthumous commemoration by her son of her transport privileges.

27. See Hemelrijk 2005, 140 with n. 41; 2015, 73–74 with n. 129 and Table 2.12 s.v. Anonyma (1), Insteia Polla, Julia Laeta (1), Lutatia, Tullia (1) and Tullia (2).

28. On this, see Hemelrijk 2015, 79; also (for the quotation) Hemelrijk 2005, 138 with n. 7.

29. Hahn 1994, 39–50, 312–313. On early (pre-27 BCE) honors to Livia at Eleusis, see *SEG* XXIV 212 with Stafford 2013, 215–216. In general on the modes of associating empresses with the divine, see Angelova 2015, 96–98.

30. Goddess at Athens: Lozano (2004), especially 178. Pergamum coin (dated between 10 and 2 BCE): *RPC* I 2359; Alexandrian coin (1–5 CE): *RPC* I 5027. *Livia Sebaste*: Chaniotis (2003) 342.

31. Cities: Plin. *HN* 6.11 and 13.44. Thracian coins (11 BCE–12 CE): *RPC* I 1708 and 1710.

32. Tac. *Ann.* 4.15, 55.

33. For what follows (with references), see Hahn 1994, 39–50, 312–313; also Kearsley 2005, 106–107, Stafford 2013, 215–217, and (on the iconography) Mikocki 1995, 18–30. For epigraphic and numismatic sources on Livia (with English translations), see Barrett 2002, 266–302. More generally on comparisons of emperors and empresses to divinities, Riewald 1912, especially 301–329 on “new” gods and goddesses.

34. On which see Schmalz 2009, 104–105.

35. See Hekster 2009, 95–107, especially 104 n. 32 on Suet. *Vesp.* 23.4 and Vespasian's prediction of his own apotheosis.

36. For a summation of these and other markers, see Temporini-Gräfin Vitzthum 2006.

37. For a sense of the scope of the bibliography on the subject, see Kolb 2010, 313–368.

38. Sources in Temporini 1978, 87–88 n. 388 (also dispelling the notion that Nero's wife Statilia Messalina accompanied him on his tour of Greece in 66–67). Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 692–695 offers a useful list of all Roman elite women attested abroad in the imperial period into the early third century. On Agrippina and the ashes, see also Brennan 2012, 357.

39. Hemelrijk 2015, with 72–82 on the civic priesthoods of the imperial cult, and 255–257 on *mater patriae*. The quotation is from 70.

40. Barrett 2002, 53–54, 66, 117, 242, and (for the quotation) xi; also Barrett 2001 for Tacitus' portrayal.

41. On the two Julias, see Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 358–360 no. 421 and 635–636 no. 813. On Tiberius and his grandson Nero (son of Germanicus), whom he denounced to the Senate in 29 for homosexuality, see Tac. *Ann.* 5.3.

42. Sources: Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 253–254 no. 285 (Livia Orestilla); 429–431 no. 504 (Lollia Paulina); 454–455 no. 550 (Milonia Caesonia); 606–608 no. 774 (Valeria

Messalina); 365–357 no. 426 (Agrippina Minor); 223–224 no. 246 (Octavia); 523–524 no. 646 (Poppaea Sabina); 579–580 no. 730 (Statilia Messalina).

43. For Otho's relationship to Statilia Messalina, see Suet. *Otho* 10.2 with Bauman 1992, 209.

44. Suet. *Vesp.* 14.1. On Vitellius' family, see Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 571–572 no. 715 (Sextilia); 344–346 no. 399 (Galeria Fundana); 640 no. 817 (daughter, presumably named Vitellia).

45. On Vespasian, see Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 319–322 no. 367 (wife Flavia Domitilla); 322–323 no. 368 (daughter), 322–323 no. 369 (granddaughter), and for Antonia Caenis, Suet. *Vesp.* 3.3, 21 and *Dom.* 12.3; Dio Cass. 64.1–4; and *CIL* VI 4057, 6607, 18358, and 20950.

46. Titus' wives: Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 109–110 no. 93 (Arrecina Tertulla); 442–443 no. 525 (Marcia Furnilla). Of his daughters, two are known: see 316–317 no. 362 ([Flavia], from his first marriage, who died young) and 323–324 no. 371 ([Flavia] Iulia, also probably born of the first marriage). Titus and Berenice: Suet. *Tit.* 7.1–2, Dio Cass. 66.15.4, [Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 10.7.

47. For Domitia Longina, see n. 20 above.

Chapter 2

1. Plin. *Paneg.* 47.4. On this and what follows on the reign of Nerva and his adoption of Trajan, see Brennan 2000, especially 42–43, 62–63.

2. Dio Cass. 68.14.4. For the sources on Plotina, see Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 511–512 no. 631 (yet venturing no dates for Plotina's birth and marriage).

3. In the year 100 Pliny (*Paneg.* 84.6) relates that when the Senate had voted Marciana and Plotina each the title of *Augusta*, they refused it, on the grounds that Trajan had not yet assumed the title *pater patriae*. For Trajan's proposal to the Senate that they deify Nerva, see *Paneg.* 11.2. For the year 104/105 as a terminus for the grants, see *CIL* XI 1333 = Dessau, *ILS* 288, with the discussion of Kolb 2010a, 25–26.

4. Anazarbus in Cilicia minted separate Plotina and Marciana issues already in 107/108: see *RPC* III 3363 (Plotina, on the larger denomination) and 3364 (Marciana). On Marcianopolis (= modern Devnya, Bulgaria), see especially Amm. Marc. 27.4.12 with M. Fluss in *RE* XIV (1928) s.v. Marcianopolis coll. 1505–1511. Plotinopolis: E. Oberhummer in *RE* XXI (1951) s.v. Plotinopolis col. 471 (the circumstances of the foundation are unknown).

5. See Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 646 no. 824 (Ulpia Marciana); 546–547 no. 681 (Salonia Matidia); 446–447 no. 533 (Matidia II); 624–625 no. 802 (Sabina). I subscribe to the doubts of Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 540–541 no. 674 that Matidia I married a third time, and was the mother of Rupilia Faustina (mother of Antoninus Pius' wife, Faustina I, and paternal grandmother of Marcus Aurelius, according to *HA Marc. Aur.* 1.4). On the difficulties this identification involves, see Birley 2005a, 244; also (less resistant) Levick 2014, 22–23 and 185 n. 50. The only inscriptions known for Rupilia Faustina are on brick stamps from her yard (*CIL* XV 456–457), on which see Setälä 2002, 189. Widowhood of Matidia I: *Inscr. Ital.* IV 1 77 line 23.

6. Coins proclaiming the deification of Trajan Pater: *RIC* II (Trajan) 251–252, 726–727 (there paired with Nerva), and 762–764, with Beckmann 2007, especially 79–80, for the chronology.

7. See *RIC* II (Trajan) 742; and cf. *RIC* I (Gaius) 33, a *sestertius* from early in Caligula's reign (37/38 CE), with reverse legend *AGRIPPINA DRVILLA IVLIA*.

8. Coins commemorating Marciana's consecration: *RIC* II (Trajan) 743–750; outside Rome, Anazarbus in Cilicia in an issue that bears the date 113/114 (see *RPC* III 3371, with legend *the[a]*). The *Fasti Ostienses* commemorate ceremonies for Marciana on 29 August and 3 September 112: *Inscr. Ital.* XIII 1 5 (p. 572). Dedication from Lyttos: Chaniotis 1986, 195. Sources (epigraphic) on the divinization of Marciana: Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 646. On questions of procedure in apotheosis: Fishwick 2002, especially 348 for Marciana.

9. Provincial coinage depicting Matidia Augusta in her lifetime: see especially *RPC* III 3370 (Anazarbus, 113/114), with 3369 for Plotina and 3371 for Marciana; 1683, cf. 1685 (Mytilene on Lesbos); also 1831 (Thyatira in Lydia), 1232–1233 (Laodicea in Phrygia), 2632 (Cotiaeum in Phrygia). Matidia on campaign with Trajan and Plotina: *HA Hadr.* 5.9, confirmed by *Inscr. Ital.* IV 1 77 line 8, with Beckmann 2007, especially 81–82, for the chronology.

10. Lifetime issues for Matidia at Rome: *RIC* II (Trajan) 758 (with adult figure sacrificing); 759–761 (with children). Coinage of Sabina with children on reverse: *RIC* II (Hadrian) 1030 and 1040. Later use in empress coinage: *RIC* IV (Philip I) 122, 134, 208 (types of Otacilia Severa); *RIC* (Gallienus) 11 (of Salonina). Cf. *RIC* (Postumus) 279, 320.

11. Anazarbus coin of 107/108: *RPC* III 3363. For Plotina's Rome coins, see *RIC* II (Trajan) 725 (deified Nerva and Plotina on reverse); 728–732, 736–737 (Vesta reverse); 733 (Ara Pudicitiae, or “Altar of Chastity”); 735 (Felicitas Augusta, i.e., good fortune as an imperial quality); 738 (Minerva); 739 (sacrificial symbols); 740–741 (Fides Augusta, i.e., good faith).

Chapter 3

1. For sources on the family backgrounds of Trajan and Hadrian, see W. H. Groß in *RE Supp.* X (1965) s.v. *Ulpus* 1a coll. 1035–1113; P. von Rohden in *RE* I (1894) s.v. *Aelius* 64 coll. 493–521. On Trajan Pater, see Groß in *RE Supp.* X s.v. *Ulpus* 1 coll. 1032–1035.

2. *HA Hadr.* 1.2 and 4. For his father's age at death, *PFayum* 19 = Cornell 2013, 1088 no. 97 F 7.

3. *CIL* III 550 (p. 985) = *IG* II 3286 = Dessau, *ILS* 308.

4. *HA Hadr.* 2.5–6.

5. *HA Hadr.* 2.2 and 7; 4.5 with Williams 2010, 27 with 320 n. 118 (citing Dio Cass. 68.7.4 and 21.2 for Trajan's “discreet” sexual relations with boys in the court). For doubts that Hadrian had a sexual relationship with the emperor, see Fündling 2006, 299.

6. See *HA Hadr.* 1.2 and 2.1–10. On L. Licinius Sura, *cos. suff.* 93 (possibly 97), 102 and then *ordinarius* in 107, see Fündling 2006, 316–318; also Barnes 1976 (his wealth and homosexuality).

7. Basic sources on Sabina in Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 624–625 no. 802; see also Fündling 2006, 244–245 (with bibliography). Sabina's ex-slaves received the *prae-nomen* Lucius and the family name Vibius: see most explicitly *AE* 1916, 53 (Rome); also *CIL* VI 28804 (again Rome), where the husband and wife L. Vibius Florus and Vibia

Chelidon further broadcast their status as the empress's freedpersons by choosing names for their children such as Vibius Sabinianus, Vibius Matidianus, and Vibia Matidiana.

8. On Sabina's father, see E. Hanslik, *RE* VIII A2 (1958) s.v. Vibius 21 col. 1966; also Syme 1953, 156. Remarkably, that his praenomen was Lucius rests only on the evidence of the nomenclature of Sabina's imperial freedmen, on which see n. 7 above.

9. Antigonus of Nicaea ap. Heph. Astr. *Apotel.* 2.18.23, with the translation of Neugebauer and van Hoesen 1959, 90. On this text, see now Heilen 2015, with 668–669 and 673 on Sabina.

10. On a supposed reference to our Vibia Sabina at *CIL* XI 1147 line 51 (from Veleia, in modern Emilia in northern Italy, ca. 98–102 CE) see Boatwright 1991, 523–524, expressing doubts; the name Vibius is common in the region.

11. Dio Cass. 69.1. Boatwright 2000, 20–26 surveys the limitations of Dio and our other main literary sources for the reign of Hadrian. On the epitomator Xiphilinus' methods and aims in excerpting Dio for the years 69 BCE to 229 CE, see Mallan 2013, especially 619–621 and 633–634 for how contemporary concerns influenced Dio's summation of Hadrian's reign.

12. Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 13–14, with 13.13 on Plotina, and 14.7–9 for Antinoös.

13. [Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 14.1; see also *HA Hadr.* 1.2 with Birley 1997, 309.

14. [Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 14.8. On the childlessness of the couple, see Antigonus ap. Heph. Astr. *Apotel.* 2.18.23, also Dio Cass. 69.20.2 (purported speech of Hadrian in early 138).

15. Spartianus' dedications: *HA Ael.* 1.1 and *HA Pesc. Nig.* 9.1 (Diocletian); *HA Geta* 1.1 (Constantine). Date and authorship of the *Historia Augusta*: see Dessau 1889 with Rohrbacher 2013 for subsequent views. For the terminal date of ca. 385, see Cameron 2010, 743–782.

16. Cameron 2010, 778.

17. *HA Hadr.* 11.2; cf. *Ant. Pius* 5.4 (correctly crediting the emperor Antoninus Pius also with the wall he started in Britain).

18. *HA Hadr.* 1.2, 2.10.

19. *HA Hadr.* 11.3 with Syme 1958, 779 for the suggestion of Britain itself as the location.

20. *HA Hadr.* 11.3–4.

21. *HA Hadr.* 23.8–11.

22. Malalas *Chronogr.* 11.3 and 15 T.

Chapter 4

1. Inscription from Athens: *CIL* III 550 (p. 985) = *IG* II 3286 = Dessau, *ILS* 308. The quotation is from Gray 1919, 141. For a valuable, concise discussion of treatments of Hadrian in both modern-era historical writing and fiction, see Bradley 2012.

2. See Birley 1997, 61; for other possible influences on the beard, cf. Vout 2010.

3. Archonship: see Dessau, *ILS* 208 with Phlegon in *FGrH* 257 F 36 (xxv). Coroneia: *SEG* XXVII 55.

4. Quotation is from *HA Hadr.* 5.9. On the early stages of the overland route, see especially *CIL* VI 5076 (showing way stations in Cilicia and Cappadocia 12–19 October 117); *Syll.*³ 831 (presence at Juliopolis in Bithynia on 11 November). In general on the route of the emperor's "first journey," see Birley 1997, 80–92.

5. On the four consulars, see Cornell 2013, 626–627 for bibliography. The main account is *HA Hadr.* 7.1–4 (citing the emperor's *Autobiography*) and 9.3–4 (Attianus' alleged role); also Dio Cass. 69.2.5 (reporting the conspiracy was to kill Hadrian at a hunt). Attianus' further list: *HA Hadr.* 5.5–6. Notoriety of the executions: see especially Dio Cass. 69.2.5 and 23.2.

6. *HA Hadr.* 6.1–4, with *CIL* VI 2078 = 32374 for the date of Hadrian's return to Rome. Attianus' enrollment in the Senate: *Hadr.* 8.7; cf. Dio Cass. 69.23.3. On Hadrian's praetorian prefects, see Syme 1980, 67–80. Dedications to Septicius Clarus: Plin. *Ep.* 1.1 (and cf. 1.15, 7.28, and 8.1 as the addressee of individual letters); and, for Suetonius' dedication, Lydus *Mag.* 2.6.

7. Gaba coins from 116/117: *RPC* III 3947–3948 (Hadrian) and 3951 (Sabina, all with the catalogue's date "117/118"); cf. 3950 (an undated Hadrian/Sabina coin, again with the title *Sebaste*). On its swiftness to commemorate, see *RPC* II 2234, 2237 (Domitian before his accession); 2239 (Domitia Augusta soon following accession); and 3941 with Rosenberger (II) 1972–1977, Gaba no. 8 (Trajan and Plotina, three years before the great eastern campaign).

8. See *SEG* XLV 1264 (Eleutherna in Crete, from 117 or perhaps 118); XXXIII 619 (Tyras on the north shore of the Black Sea, early March 118). On such unofficial "anticipatory" titulature in general, see Chanotis 2003. Some of Hadrian's earliest coin issues at Rome also give him the title before his arrival in the city: see *RIC* II (Hadrian) 2–8.

9. For what follows, see Halfmann 1986, 190–210 with the review-discussion of Syme 1988; also Birley 1997, 113–118 (Second Journey), 203–278 (Third Journey).

10. See Fündling 2006, 3–87 (*Historia Augusta*) and 89–179 (other sources, including 157–158 on the jurists), with further literature; and on the "allusive fictions" that generally permeate the *Historia Augusta*, Rohrbacher 2016.

11. On the Bar Kochba revolt, contrast the treatment of *HA Hadr.* 14.2 and 21.8 with Dio Cass. 69.14.1–3, with Eck 1999 and Eshel 2006 on the seriousness and consequences of the conflict. More generally, for the *Historia Augusta*'s tendentious emphasis on Hadrian's pacific policy, see *Hadr.* 5.1, 6.8, 9.1, 10.2, 12.8, 17.12 with 21.8 for the remark on absence from his reign of important military expeditions. See also Dio Cass. 69.9.5–6 (Hadrian's preference to handle hostile peoples by means of bribes and psychological tactics, the latter statement confirmed by Dessau, *ILS* 2558); [Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 14.10.

12. Boatwright 2000, 15.

13. Quotations from *HA Hadr.* 16.1; [Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 14.6; Dio Cass. 69.3. Translated fragments of the *Autobiography*: Cornell 2013, no. 97, 626–628, 1086–1088, with F7 = *PFayum* 19 for the probable preface. For a full recent discussion of the autobiography, see Westall and Brenk 2011, 363–416, esp. 372–389; see also Birley 2005, and Fündling 2006, 96–101. In the *Autobiography* Hadrian is said to have ranged back to his family's remotest origins (*HA Hadr.* 1.1); the book allegedly still had a readership in the late second century CE (*HA Sev.* 1.6). For this and what follows on the composition of the *Autobiography*, see Brennan 2015, 115–116.

14. *HA Hadr.* 16.1.

15. For the sources on Phlegon, see E. Frank in *RE* XX 1 (1941) s.v. Phlegon 2 coll. 261–264. Fragments collected in *FGrH* 257.

16. Tert. *Apol.* 5.7 with Birley 1997, 306 and 358 n. 17; the (common) pejorative sense of *curiositas* is underlined by the plural, which (as Birley notes) is not found earlier.

17. *HA Ant. Pius* 11.3.

18. Explicit at *HA Ael.* 3.9.

19. See Amm. Marc. 28.4.14.

20. See *HA Hadr.* 2.10 for Trajan's objection to the marriage. On Marius Maximus as the main factual source for the earlier books of the *Historia Augusta*, see in general Birley 1997a and Rohrbacher 2013; and cf. Syme 1971, 30–53 for the influential view that another (unidentified) authority may also have provided historical material to this late compilation.

21. Tert. *Apol.* 5.7. For the sketch of ancient literary assessments of Hadrian's personality that follows below, see Dio Cass. 69.2.1–11.4, 16.3, 18.1, 22.2, and 26.1; *HA Hadr.* 2.1 and 4, 7.1–11.7, 13.1–14.11, 16.1–26.4; *Ael.* 3.8–9, *Ant. Pius* 3.8, and *Marc Aur.* 11.6; also Julian. *Caes.* 8; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.3–8; [Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 14.4; Oros. 7.13.3; Malalas *Chronogr.* 11.13 and 20 T; and *Suda* II 858 s.v. *paidika*, and cf. the lucid synthesis of Nixon 1971, 182–208.

22. *HA Hadr.* 20.3; [Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 14.6.

Chapter 5

1. On this, see the coins showing Trajan/Plotina + Marciana at Parium in Mysia (undated, *RPC* III 1543), and Plotina + Matidia/Artemis of Perge at Mytilene (1683).

2. On the Anazarbus issues of 113/114, see *RPC* III 3371 (Marciana), 3370 (Matidia), 3369 (Plotina), at denominations respectively of one-and-a-half, two, and three *assaria*. The other dated examples are Trajan/Marciana, at Anazarbus, in 107/108 (3368); Trajan/Plotina at Anazarbus in 107/108 (3363); also Plotina/Zeus at Gaba (Syria) in 111/112 and 114/115 (3943 and 3944); Trajan/Plotina at Alexandria ad Issum (Cilicia) in 114/115 (3397).

3. For this complex series of transitional issues, see *RIC* II (Hadrian) 2–34 and 534a–b, especially 29–30 (Trajan/Plotina); 31 (Plotina/Vesta); 32, 32a, and 33 (Hadrian/Plotina); and 34 (Plotina/Matidia). *RIC* II 24a (Hadrian/Trajan) shows obverse die-sharing with 32 (Plotina on reverse).

4. Matidia's consecration: Smallwood 1966, 23 no. 7 (for the date of 23 December); *HA Hadr.* 9.9 and 19.5. Temple and altar: F. de Caprariis in *LTUR* III (1996) s.v. Matidia, Templum 233. Speculation on height and area: Stamper 2005, 259–260 n. 42. Surrounding portico: E. Rodríguez Almeida in *LTUR* I (1993) s.v. Basilica Marcianae, Basilica Matidia 182. Medallion: Dressel 1906.

5. Coins of Matidia's *consecratio* series: *RIC* II (Hadrian) 423a–426, 751–756 (eagle reverse); 427 and 757 (Pietas with altar reverse). For provincial dedications to this woman in her own right see Riel 1997 = *IK* 53 *Alexandria Troas* no. 19; Şahin (I) 1999–2004 = *IK* 54 *Perge* no. 98, to be dated to 121 (part of a larger complex discussed in Chapter 6); and *CIL* III 2731 (Dalmatian Aequum = modern Čitluk in Herzegovina), which is of special interest since it must date after Hadrian's death in 138.

6. For the fragmentary speech, see *Inscr. Ital.* IV 1 77 (with improved text in Jones 2004), lines 1–6 (Matidia as mother-in-law), 7–10 (her relationship with uncle Trajan), 11–14 (her personal qualities), 15–22 (Hadrian's inability to enumerate fully her virtues), 23–30 (direct appeal to the deceased, with further reference to personal qualities and family relationships), 31–37 (ancestry). For the translated section (and its context), see Jones 2004, 268–269, which argues that the occasion for the speech was not Matidia's funeral (as is generally supposed) but rather Hadrian's request to the Senate

for her consecration. Quotation from Birley 1997, 107 (also suggesting Tivoli as place of death).

7. *HA Hadr.* 11.7, cf. 3–6.

8. *HA Hadr.* 2.10 (marriage to Sabina), 4.1 (appointment as “legate” during time of Parthian expedition, with Beckmann 2007, 80–81 for the chronology), 4.4 (the second consulship, on which cf. 3.10, where it is said that Hadrian’s first consulship of 108 also brought the expectation of adoption). There is no compelling explanation for the ultra-rare *aureus RIC* II (Hadrian) 1 with reverse legend HADRIANO TRAIANO CAESARI, which bears a portrait of Trajan on the obverse of a type that dates between March 116 and August 117. It may have been struck after Trajan’s death: Beckmann 2007, 87.

9. *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 13.13.

10. See *HA Hadr.* 4.10 for Plotina’s “trick” of having someone (?Attianus) impersonate her husband; also *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 13.13; and *Dio Cass.* 69.1.2–4 with 10.3. For the dates, *HA Hadr.* 4.7, cf. *Dio Cass.* 69.2.1–2. See also Dessau, *ILS* 318 = *CIL* VI 33885 line 17 (acclamation on 11 August), and *POxy.* LV 3781 with Bitner 2012 (celebrations ordered at the local level in Egypt by 25 August 117). *Dio Cassius’* father: *PIR*² C 485.

11. *HA Hadr.* 16.10. For the dossiers of 121 (*IG* II² 1099, esp. lines 21–23, cited in text) and 125 (*IG* II² 1097), see Van Bremen 2005.

12. Honors for Plotina: *HA Hadr.* 12.2; *Dio Cass.* 69.10.3. On the date of her death, Levick 2014, 122–123. Joint issue with *DIVIS PARENTIBVS* legend on the reverse: *RIC* II (Hadrian) 232a and 232b (to be dated not before 134).

13. On Antinoös’ portrayal on contorniates, see Alföldi and Alföldi 1976, nos. 433 (explicitly assimilated to Pan) and 434, in each case depicted with nude torso and shepherd’s crook.

14. Antinoös’ native city: *Paus.* 8.9.7 and *Dio Cass.* 69.11.2, also *Strabo* 12.4.7 (its products). On its area, see Foss 1990, 173–174; on the roads, Talbert 2000, 1223. The locality Mantineion: *Socrates Hist. eccl.* 2.38. Hermes and a (mortal?) Mantinoe as his supposed parents: *POxy.* L 3537v; cf. *LIII* 4352. Note also *SEG* XLI 293 bis (Myloi on the Argolic Gulf), the base of an Antinoös statue (mysteriously) said to be dedicated by his “father” and “mother.” The figure of Antinoe: *Paus.* 8.8.4 and 8.9.5 with Birley 1997, 180.

15. Alleged membership in the imperial *paedagogium* (pages’ hall): *Tert. Apol.* 13 [9], cf. *Ad nat.* 2.7. Some sources term him “ephebe” (*Amm. Marc.* 22.16.2; *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 14.7), but that hardly gives us a fixed minimum age. Beauty: note especially the contemporary poet Pancrates (*POxy.* VIII 1085 line 9), where the text seems to offer the unique adjective *megetatos*, “exceptionally lovely”; also *HA Hadr.* 14.6; *Clem. Al. Protrep.* 4.49.1–2; *Tatianus Ad Gr.* 10.1.

16. Jones 2010, 82 for the quotation. See *Paus.* 8.9.7, and cf. 7.4.6 on the choice of the verb for “esteemed” (a mythological instance of extreme devotion).

17. See *Iust. Apol.* I 29.4; *Hegesipp. Frag.* p. 218 R = *Euseb. Hist. eccl.* 4.8.2 with Renberg 2010, 178 n. 73; *Clem. Al. Protrep.* 4.49.1–3; *Tert. Ad nat.* 2.10.11.

18. See *Origen C. Cels.* 3.36 (cf. 38) and 8.9; *Athanas. C. gentes* 9.35 and 40; *John Chrysostom, Hom. in 2 Corinth.* 12.10 ap. *Migne, PG* LXI p. 581. Later authors: *Socrates Hist. eccl.* 3.23 (Hadrian deified his *eromenos*); *Theodoretus Gr. affect. cur.* 8.28 (Hadrian ordered divine honors for his *paidika*); cf. *Georg. Monach. Chron.* ap. *Migne, PG* CX p. 60 (who portrays Antinoös as Hadrian’s slave-boy, but otherwise is derivative of *Athanasius*).

19. Dio Cass. 69.11.2–3; *HA Hadr.* 14.5–6; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.7 and 9; *Suda* Π 858 s.v. *paidika* (also cf. M 668 s.v. Mesomedes). On the horoscope, Heilen 2015, 668–669.

20. See Nixon 1971, 201.

21. Sources on L. Ceionius Commodus: *PIR*² C 605, with the further discussion of Piso 1995. His son (the future emperor Lucius Verus): *PIR*² C 606. Daughters: Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 191–193 nos. 204 (Ceionia Fabia, fiancée of Marcus Aurelius, for whom see especially *HA Marc. Aur.* 4.5) and 205 (Ceionia Plautia). Hadrian's ill health as motive for decision: Dio Cass. 69.17.1 and *HA Ael.* 2.1. Date of adoption: *CIL* VI 10242 with the discussion of Høtje 1999, 220. Celebrations of the adoption: *HA Hadr.* 23.12 and 14. Joint dedication from Avitta Bibba: *CIL* VIII 799 = VIII 12266 = *ILTun.* 671. See also *RPC* III 1546 (Hadrian/Aelius + Sabina), apparently from Parium in Mysia.

22. The *Historia Augusta* consistently but wrongly gives Commodus the cognomen 'Verus.' On the possibility of Hadrian's designation as 'Caesar,' see Chapter 3 on *RIC* II (Hadrian) 1. Commodus' wife (presumably named Avidia): Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 136–137 no. 128.

23. Commodus' ill health: see especially Dio Cass. 69.17.1; also *HA Hadr.* 23.14, *Ael.* 3.7 and 4.6–7 (noting alleged plans to choose a different heir). Coins at Rome: *RIC* II (Hadrian) 428–444, 1053–1075 (all dated to 137); undated are 986–989 (Hadrian and Aelius Caesar on obverse), 1076–1077 (Aelius Caesar alone). His death: see especially Dio Cass. 69.20.1 (natural causes); *HA Hadr.* 23.15 and *Ael.* 4.7–8 (alleging a medicine overdose). Funeral and honors: *HA Ael.* 6.6 and 7.1, with Piso 1995 and Høtje 1999 for discussion of the (significant) material remains. Burial in mausoleum (only after the dispute over Hadrian's divinization was resolved): *CIL* VI 985 = 31220.

24. *HA Hadr.* 23.10–11; *Ael.* 3.4 and 8, cf. 5.3.

25. Commodus paired with Antinoös: *HA Tyr. Quar. Firm.* 8.8. Aelius Caesar's dedications to Antinoös: *AE* 1994, 1396 (temple at Carnuntum) and *AE* 1972, 500 (Singidunum, perhaps also a temple). Coins of Tmolus: *RPC* III 2388 (Sabina), 2387 (Hadrian and Aelius Caesar), 2389 (Antinoös), with Foss 1982 and further discussion in Chapter 9.

26. For Hadrian's ruminations on the succession, see *HA Hadr.* 7.1, 23.2–6, 25.8, and Dio Cass. 69.17.3 with Levick 2014, 42. On Gentianus, see Hemelrijk 1999, 335 n. 114 (last seen with an appointment in Macedonia in 120/121). His sister memorialized him with Latin hexameters inscribed on one of the pyramids in Egypt (Dessau, *ILS* 1046a, transcribed in the 14th century), which she surely visited in 130 as part of the imperial touring party. See further in Chapter 7 with n. 17.

27. On the fall of Servianus and Fuscus, see Dio Cass. 69.17.1–3 (wrongly making the latter 18 years old); *HA Hadr.* 15.8, 23.1–3 and 8, and (dating Servianus' suicide toward the end of Hadrian's life) 25.8; Antigonus of Nicaea ap. Heph. Astr. *Apotel.* 2.18.62–66 with Heilen 2005, 52–53 (especially on the reckoning of the age), and, on the political aspects, Birley 1997, 291–292 and 355 n. 26. Translation of the Antigonus passage is adapted from Birley and Heilen.

28. Carcopino 1949.

29. For a roster of authorities supporting this chronology of the Pedanius affair (first suggested by F. Cramer in 1954), see Heilen 2005, 53 n. 30. Other opposition, with Catilius Severus named: *HA Hadr.* 24.6–7 with Fündling 2006, 1083–1087.

30. See Dio Cass. 69.2.5 and 23.3 and especially 70.1.2–3; also *HA Hadr.* 27.1–2; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.13. Hadrian's departure from city for Baiae: *HA Hadr.* 25.6; on his death and burial there see Chapter 10 with n. 13. In general, for the sequence of events from

Hadrian's death through his eventual divinization, see Fündling 2006, 1151–1160, and on the proposed memory sanction, Flower 2006, 90–94.

31. In general on the Mausoleum, see Davies 2010, 35–40, Vitti 2014, and Coarelli 2014a; and for the evidence of brick-stamps on the date, Oppen 2008a, 213–214. Comparison of the tombs of Augustus and Hadrian: Boatwright 1987, 169.

32. For the quotation, Yarrow 2012, 430, who follows Hill 1970, 79–85 in the belief that stages in the standoff are reflected in Pius' early emperor coinage.

33. Consecration issue: *RIC* II (Hadrian) 389A and B, on which cf. Hill 1970, 85, suggesting early 139. Interment in mausoleum: Dio Cass. 69.23.1, *HA Hadr.* 19.11, cf. *Ant. Pius* 8.2 and *Marc Aur.* 7.10; and especially *CIL* VI 984 = 31220a1 (Antoninus already *cos. des.* III for 140).

34. Burial of L. Aelius Caesar: *CIL* VI 985 = 31220 (now lost) with Høtje 1999. Honors at Puteoli: *HA Hadr.* 27.3, and *SEG* LIII 1090 and LVI 1125 on the games. Temple: M. Cipollone, in *LTUR* III (1996) s.v. Hadrianus, Divus, templum, Hadrianeum 7–8. On Hadrian's reception by the third-century emperors, see Dmitriev 2004, also Hekster 2015, 222–224.

35. See Barnes 1967; also Champlin 1976, 89.

Chapter 6

1. Domitia Paulina honored at Phaselis (Lycia) with the unofficial title *Augusta*: *SEG* LV 1471. As “sister of the Augustus”: Attaleia (*IGRom.* III 773, a private dedication of one Julia Sancta), and Lyttos in Crete (*IC I XVIII* 43, public, dated 124/125).

2. *BM Coins, Rom. Emp.* III 374 no. 1029 with Abdy 2014, 76–77 for quotation.

3. See the discussion in Appendix 2, especially that of Adembri on C1; Wegner and Carandini on C3 (from Gallia Narbonensis, and assigned to Hadrian's visit there in 121/122 despite the fact that it has engraved eyes, a feature that Wegner elsewhere maintains came only after 128) and C4 (from Italica in Hispania Baetica, which Hadrian did not visit as emperor: Dio Cass. 69.10.1); and C13, C15, C17, C22, and C24.

4. Gerasa: *SEG* VII 847. Olisipo: *CIL* II 4992 = 5221 = Dessau, *ILS* 323. Lyttos: *SEG* XLII 813 (124/125) and XLII 814 (?125/126). Messene: *SEG* LIX 412. Ephesus: *IEph.* 280 = McCabe, *Ephesos* 1002.

5. On the situation and history of Perge, see Grainger 2009. Cult of ‘Artemis Pergaea’: Jones 1976, 235–237.

6. The bibliography is extensive. See Şahin (I) 1999–2004 (vol. 1, edition of the relevant inscriptions with commentary); also Boatwright 1991a and 1993, Trimble 2011 (especially 230–235 on the benefactions), Fejfer 2008, 363–369, and (most expansively) Kalinbayrak 2011.

7. On the Plancii, Jameson 1965, 55. For the cognomen, see Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 424–425 for no. 494 Licinia Magna, and p. 429 for (Cornelia) Magna. Maternal grandfather: Şahin (I) 1999–2004, 110. Note from the later second century CE the clearly related Plancia Magna Aquillia (Raepsaet Charlier 1987, 496 no. 610), who is specifically said to be descended from kings (*AE* 1975, 811, from Ancyra).

8. Grainger 2009, 166.

9. For what follows, see especially Jameson 1965, and in *RE Supp.* XIV (1974) s.v. Perge 2, coll. 375–383; W. Eck in *RE Supp.* XIV (1974) s.v. Plancius 5, 7 and 8 coll. 385–386; ; Şahin (I) 1999–2004 (especially 110, on the wife of M. Plancius Varus); and

Trimble 2011, 184–186, 192–194 (career of Plancia Magna). On Plancia’s fictive matronymic “daughter of the *polis*,” see Şahin (I) 1999–2004, nos. 117–118, 120–112, 122–125 with Harland 2007, 66–67.

10. On the son, see Şahin (I) 1999–2004, 114 and 164–167 with inscriptions nos. 127 (dedication by his mother) and 128 (athletic victories at Perge, in games his grandfather had founded).

11. See Şahin (I) 1999–2004, nos. 117–119, 120–125 with Trimble 2011, 193 n. 58.

12. For what follows on the Plancia Magna’s architectural program, see Trimble 2011, 171, 193–195, 234–235.

13. For the *ktistai* bases, Şahin (I) 1999–2004, nos. 101–109, and regarding their arrangement, Kalinbayrak 2011, 82–83 (much improving on Şahin).

14. See Şahin (I) 1999–2004, nos. 86 (overall dedication to *patria*); 89–90 (local goddesses); 91–93 (Augustus, Nerva, Trajan); 94–95 (Hadrian); 96–98 (Marciana, Plotina, Matidia I); 99 (Sabina).

15. Boatwright 1993, 256–257, and often later noted. Eck 2000, 659 n. 73 denies any special significance.

16. Şahin (I) 1999–2004, no. 111 should date from 131/132, but need not imply an imperial visit: see Grainger 2009, 166–167.

17. Trimble 2011, 194–195 (for the quotations), and on the statues, 401–402 no. 84 (that of Plancia Magna); 402–404 no. 85 (Sabina); 404–405 no. 86 (Faustina II), with 170; also Fejfer 2008, 361–369.

18. For this material, the *Ars grammatica* of Dositheus ‘Magister,’ see Keil, *GL* 7376–436 with the biographical remarks of Kaster 1997, 278.

19. For these “Hadriani sententiae,” see the text of Goetz, *CGL* III 30–38 (longer version, with the alleged letter at 37), 387–390 (shorter version). On the Ps.-Dositheus *Hermeneumata*, see Dickey 2012, 16–44; on the “Sententiae Hadriani” specifically, Lewis 1991 (suggesting revision of the anecdotes continued into the fourth century CE).

20. For Hadrian’s birth and family, see *HA Hadr.* 1.2–3 with 2.1. The date of birth is amply confirmed: see, e.g., Dessau, *ILS* 7214 (celebratory disbursements at Rome), also *Inscr. Ital.* XIII 2 42 (from a fourth-century calendar of games). Public birthday celebrations: see Dio Cass. 69.8.2 and *HA Hadr.* 7.12 with Birley 1997, 118–119 (games at Rome in 119); Dessau, *ILS* 7196 (celebrations at Nicolia in Phrygia). Letter of Hadrian to Antoninus: *PFayum* 19 = Cornell 2013, 1088 no. 97 F 7; cf. Alexander 1938, 170–172. For the (strong) possibility that we have preserved here the opening of Hadrian’s own *Autobiography*, see further in Chapter 10.

21. For contrasting assumptions on the letter’s recipient, see, e.g., Gregorovius 1898, 174 n. 3 (Plotina) and many others; Gil and Torallas Tovar 2010, 101 (Domitia Paulina).

22. Date of construction of Hadrian’s Villa: see Bloch 1947, 253–256 for the brick stamps, which date from 123 (so construction started by that year) to 137; more generally on the chronology of construction, Smith 1978, 73–93. The so-called Villa of the Vibii Vari at Tibur is often assigned to relatives of Sabina, and indeed has yielded a portrait head of Matidia II: Mari 2007.

23. For the possibility of Hadrian’s mother remarrying or that Matidia is meant, see Birley 1997, 110 and 309.

24. Hadrian’s transformation of *Parilia* to *Romaia*: Ath. 8.63. For the commemorative coin issue, see *RIC* II (Hadrian) 144 and 609 with Bergmann 2008, 379. Discussion of sources for inauguration of the temple’s site: Boatwright 1987, 119–122.

25. See Birley 1997, 113–114 for the quotations; and 114–150 for a detailed reconstruction of the western portion of the Second Journey, with 151–188 for the eastern, and the return to Rome.

26. For the Second Journey in the *Historia Augusta*, see *Hadr.* 10.1–13.5. The emperor's direct (and unexpected) travel from Spain to Syria is confirmed by *CIL* VI 1567 = XIV 473; cf. also Dio Cass. 69.10.1 (failure to visit his *patria* of Italica in Baetica).

27. [Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 14.4–5; Dio Cass. 69.3.3. For the important principle that a dedication need not imply the honorand's personal presence, see Højte 2009.

28. Thus Birley 1997, 177, and Kapetanopoulos 1992–1998.

29. On Herculaneus and Philopappus, see Brennan 1998, 217–219, especially 218 n. 17 for the suggestion (building on a point once made by J. H. Oliver) that *HA Hadr.* 13.1 deliberately perverts their names in the Eleusis reference; cf. Fündling 2006, 629–630 (skeptical). Grades of mysteries: Bremmer 2014, 9–10. For the centrality of initiation in Hadrian's ideology, see further Chapter 7. On the Philopappus monument at Athens, see Kleiner 1983, especially 9–17 for the background. His tomb inscriptions: *OGIS* 409–413.

30. Emperors' use of *frumentarii*: *HA Macr.* 12.4; *Alex. Sev.* 23.2; *Claud.* 17.1; cf. Dio Cass. 79.15.1 and 17.1 (alleging the same of Caracalla) with Fuhrmann 2012, 152–156. Manuscript problem: Birley 1997, 139.

31. For the *Historia Augusta* and Suetonius, see *HA Prob.* 2.7 (citing Marius Maximus and Suetonius as models) and more generally Rohrbacher 2016, 49–57. Suetonius honored at Hippo Regius: *AE* 1953, 73. On his dedication of the *Lives* to Septicius Clarus, see Chapter 4 n. 6.

32. On the lack of Latin parallels for *familiariter* + *se agere*, Fündling 2006, 584. Other instances of the comparative: *HA Hadr.* 3.3 (Dacian campaign) and 4.6 (the early bribery), and cf. *Ver.* 10.4. Discussion of Suetonius' works other than the *Lives*: G. Funaioli, *RE* IV A.1 (1931) s.v. Suetonius 4 coll. 623–637. In general on the incident, Birley 1997, 138–141, with 333 n. 26, and Fündling 2006, 581–588.

33. See Jer. *Chron.* p. 281 H. s.a. 128; Oros. 7.13.3; *Chron. pasch.* p. 475 D; also Syncell. *Chron.* p. 426 M.

34. See Stevenson 2007 for a detailed discussion of modes of refusal and acceptance of the title *pater patriae*.

35. *HA Hadr.* 6.4.

36. On the longevity of Domitia Longina, see Chapter 1 n. 20. The case has been made (most forcefully by Eck 1982) that Sabina was created *Augusta* in 119, after the death of her mother, Matidia, or in 123, after the demise of Plotina. This line of argument, however, takes too literally the use of what are clearly unofficial titles in provincial contexts, on which see Chaniotis 2003.

37. Castagnaro hoard (discovered 1903), containing a single coin of Sabina, *RIC* II (Hadrian) 412; Nicolai 2007, 88–89 and Abdy 2014, 79. Reka Devnia hoard (discovered 1927): Duncan-Jones 1998, 140.

38. For what follows, I have drawn heavily on Abdy 2014, as well as (more sparingly, perforce) on R. Abdy's unpublished notes in preparation for a new edition of *RIC* II for Hadrian, which he has generously shared with me. I am of course wholly to blame for any errors.

39. For references to the coins in these various groups, see Appendix 1.

40. See *RPC* III 1405 (Fortuna) and 1405A (Pietas), and cf. the slightly later 1406 (Hadrian, with title P P / Sabina as Fortuna). For the numerous instances of FORT RED on the Hadrianic coinage, see H. Mattingly's index at *RIC* II pp. 528–529.

41. On this, see Abdy 2014, 77 and 84.
42. Nicolai 2007, 91 and 94.
43. Carandini 1969, 105–107 with Nicolai 2007, 95; for a summary of the hairstyle models Carandini identifies for Sabina in all media (seven main categories, with variants), see 223–239.
44. Abdy 2014, 79 and 82.
45. On all this, see Appendix 2 C3 (Vaison), C5 (Carthage), C17 (colossal head from Ostia?), C37 (bust from Tivoli), N103 (now in Florence), N111 (relief head from Tivoli), C1 (Ostia statue) and C38 (Capitoline head) with Adembri 2007, 76–79; for the unusual hairstyle of C1, Wood 2015, 243 with n. 47. For Venus Genetrix on the reverses of Sabina's coins, see Appendix 1 (none before ca. 131). Added to this cluster should be two heads, C4 (from Italica, now in Seville) and C22 (now in Malmö), each of which shows close similarities in respect of hairstyle to C3, the statue from Vaison.
46. For what follows, see Carandini 1969, 111–131.
47. See Carandini 1969, 124–129.
48. *RIC II* (Hadrian) 413a with Abdy 2014, 78–81.
49. On what follows, see Carandini 1969, 112–124, 233–236.
50. Consider, e.g., the absence of Sabina from the detailed festival provisions honoring Hadrian at Oenoanda in Lycia (Wörrle 1988, document C lines 53–54 and 61–63) from July 125.

Chapter 7

1. On this, see Gregorovius 1898, 37–38 with Birley 1997, 201.
2. See [Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 14.8 and 10 with Suet. *Ner.* 6.2; also Dio Cass. 69.20.2. The quotation is from Morwood 2013, 29.
3. For this itinerary, see *AE* 1957, 135 (from a dedication to his traveling companion T. Caesernius Macedo) with *HA Hadr.* 13.3–6. In general, Halfmann 1986, 203 with Syme 1988, 162.
4. For the “provinces” series, see *RIC II* (Hadrian) 298–299, 840–842 (Africa), 854–860 (Mauretania), 871 (Sicily); for the *adventus* series, 315–316 and 872–875 (Africa), 897–902 (Mauretania), 906 (Sicily); for the army series, 924–925 (Mauretania); for the *restitutor* series, 322–323 and 940–942 (Africa) and 965–966 (Sicily). The Sicily and Mauretania types are struck only in bronze.
5. See *CIL VIII* 12458 (Maxula = Rades in Tunisia); *AE* 1951, 43 (Mactar); *CIL VIII* 5697 p. 1826 (Sigus = Bou Hadjar in Algeria). For later dedications to the deified Sabina in north Africa, and by African provincials in Italy, see Chapter 10.
6. On Hadrian's western travels in 128 (summarized in one sentence in *HA Hadr.* 13.4, cf. 20.4), see Birley 1997, 205–213, with Speidel 2006 for the text of the speeches preserved at Lambaesis (Dessau, *ILS* 2487), delivered between mid-June and mid-July of that year. On Hadrian's alleged renaming of Carthage, see Brennan 2015, 122–123.
7. Halfmann 1985, 203 with Syme 1988, 163 for the chronology; for the activities, Birley 1997, 215–221. Initiation into the higher grade at Eleusis: apparently commemorated by *RIC II* (Hadrian) 532 = Metcalf 1980, Type 92 nos. 352–353, on which see the discussion of Birley 1997, 215. The two visits to Sparta: *IG V 1* 32A lines 10–12 and 486 lines 6–9. For a documented list of Hadrian's main benefactions to Athens (taking in the imperial visits of 124/125, 128/129, and 131/132), see Malacrino 2001, 170–172.

8. See *IGRom*. IV 1033 (Laodicea) and *SEG* LVIII 1536 (Apamea), the latter with the republication by Jones 2009; more generally Birley 1997, 220–227 and notes.

9. For the basic text and argument, see Ramsay 1930, 276–277; Ritti et al. 2000, 7 no. D2 (Sabina, accepting Ramsay), and cf. D1 (dedication at this sanctuary by a slave of the former empress Domitia Augusta). A Vibius Onesimus later (before the year 217/218) dedicates a statue here (Öztürk and Tanriver 2010, 44–45), strengthening Ramsay’s conjecture on the *nomen* of the builder of the temple. Cult of Apollo Lairbenus: Dignas 2002, 234–243.

10. On Hadrian’s stay at Antioch on the Orontes, see Malalas *Chronogr.* 11.14–15 T; also *HA Hadr.* 14.1 with the discussion of Syme 1988, 154 (which regards Hadrian’s alleged wish to split Syria at this time as an invention of Marius Maximus) and more generally Fündling 2006, 666–668. Arrival by October 129: note the massive minting effort at Antioch in the year 128/129 (*RPC* III 3729–3755), with no dated coins to follow for the rest of Hadrian’s reign. For Hadrian’s extensive attention to Antioch and vicinity, see De Giorgi 2016. New title for Palmyra and stay at Gerasa in north Arabia: Millar 1993, 106. Token from Palmyra: *SEG* XXXIV 1450 = XXXIX 1591. Coins commemorating visit to Arabia: *RIC* II (Hadrian) 478–479, 943–944. In general on this leg of the journey, Birley 1997, 226–231; also Baker 2012, 161 (but positing Gerasa rather than Antioch as Hadrian’s winter headquarters in 129/130).

11. New section of inscription: reported by D. K. Eisenbud, *Jerusalem Post* 21 October 2014. For the evidence on Hadrian’s arrival in Judaea in 130, see Mor 2016, 185–190. Coins: *RIC* II (Hadrian) 890–894; cf. 853 (province). Hadrian at camp “at Jerusalem” (not yet called Aelia Capitolina) in spring or summer 130: *SEG* LV 1416 line 13.

12. Intervention of emperor: note references to the *expeditio Iudaica* (implying Hadrian’s personal presence on the campaign) at Dessau, *ILS* 1065, 1071, and 1092. Circumcision ban: *HA Hadr.* 14.2 with Fündling 2006, 669–675. Alleged permission to rebuild Temple: *Midrash Genesis Rabbah* 64:29. In general on modern views of the causes of the revolt (the extent of the bibliography is staggering), see Mor 2016, 129–145.

13. Dio Cass. 69.12.1–2; Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 4.6.2, and Euseb. ap. Jer. *Chron.* p. 201 H; also (following Eusebius’ basic sequence of actions) Oros. 7.13.5. On the status of Caesarea, Plin. *HN* 5.68–69.

14. See Epiphan. *De mens. et pond.* 3–14 with Baker 2012 for text (with references to the Syriac translation and other adaptations), translation, and documented discussion; the quotation is from p. 165. For the legendary tradition on Aquila (he is sometimes represented as a son of Hadrian’s sister, Domitia Paulina), and the nature of his work, see L. Ginzberg in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* II (1902)s.v. Aquila pp. 34–38. His alleged role as construction manager at Aelia Capitolina is almost certainly an urban myth: in addition to many other difficulties, note that appearances of an *aquila*—Jupiter’s bird, the eagle—in exceedingly common in numerous configurations on the reverses of coins of Aelia Capitolina, from its foundation into the mid-third century CE.

15. For the quotation, see Metcalf 2001. Roman coin evidence: Tsafir 2003 (especially for the hoard evidence) and Ecker and Cotton 2012. Early types from Aelia Capitolina: Meshorer 1989, nos. 1–2, and (for Sabina) 7 = *RPC* III 3963–3964, 3968. Dating of Bar Kochba era: Eshel 2003. Coins of the rebels: Miltenberg 1984.

16. On the Roman coins, see *RIC* II (Hadrian) 296, 300, 308–314, 838–839, 843–844, and 861–870 (“provinces” series, including Aegyptos, Alexandria, and Nilus); 317–318, 876–877 (*adventus* series, with 318 and 877 showing Sabina); significantly, there is no

restitutor type. Preliminaries in Egypt through the first arrival at Alexandria: Birley 1997, 235–240, 246–247, with Dio Cass. 69.11 and *HA Hadr.* 14.4. Alexandrian coinage of 129/130 celebrating Hadrian's arrival: see especially *RPC* III 5736 and 5742. Prohibition on senators: Tac. *Ann.* 2.59.

17. Birley 1997, 240 and 246, with further detailed discussion of each of these individuals (except for the sister of Terentius Gentianus) by Fein 1994. On "Terentia" (and her putative husband, L. Hediuf Rufus Lollianus Avitus), see Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 594–596 no. 753, and for her poem, Courtney 1995, 88 no. 74. For her brother, see *HA Hadr.* 23.5–6 (his popularity with the Senate) and Dessau, *ILS* 1046 (career).

18. Dio Cass. 69.11.4 and *IPortes* 37 with Chausson 2012, 173–176 (suggesting also bases for Hadrian and Sabina for the same location).

19. On the person and image of Antinoös, see especially Vout 2007, with 52–63 on the literary sources. On homoerotic *eros* and the hunt see already Ibyc. F 287 *PMGF* (second half of sixth century BCE). Hadrian's poem at Thespieae (probably from 124/125): *IG* VII 1828 with Gamberale 1993. Miguelez Caverio 2008, 45 and 69 usefully provides a list of Antinoös poems, which extend to the time of Diocletian in the late third century.

20. Pancrates' hunting poem: Ath. 15.21 with *POxy.* VIII 1085. For a prose encomium of the Antinoös lotus, *PMil. Vogl.* I 20 col. II 25–III 25 (Tebtunis, second or third century CE). Pancrates' spell: *PGM* IV 2441–2621. Lucian's account of Pancrates: *Philops.* 33–36. On the identity of Pancrates and his interactions with Hadrian, Birley 1997, 240–246; also Ogden 2004, discussing the date of the hunting poem at 106–107 (allowing composition after Antinoös' death).

21. Hahn 1994, 285, in a stretch, takes *RPC* III 5308 and 5411, an Alexandrian type of 121/122 and 123/124 showing Hadrian/Athena with reverse legend 'Athena Sebaste,' as an early commemoration of Sabina (who of course was not yet named 'Augusta').

22. For the Alexandria coins, see *RPC* III 5729, 5769–5771, 5787–5788, 5821, 5824, 5870, 5942, 6091, 6130 (billon Hadrian/Sabina, but see n. 23 directly below); 5772–5775 (Sabina billon obverses of 130/131, with Hahn 1994, 280–281 on the putative benefaction); and 5804–5810, 5926, 6069–6072, 6124, and cf. 6274 (Sabina bronze obverses). Eusebeia had already featured on the Alexandrian coins of Hadrian: see *RPC* III 5324 (121/122), 5670 (126/127), and 5747 (129/130); cf. 6145–6148 (136/137, a possible representation of Eusebeia in an altar complex).

23. On the Hadrian/Sabina tetradrachm of 136/137, see *RPC* III 6130. Perhaps *RPC* III 6105, two isolated Hadrian/Sabina bronzes dating to 135/136 and 136/137, represents an experiment in downgrading the couple's billon series. On the explicit Pronoia reverse type of 137/138, *RPC* III 6252–6253, 6255. On the Antinoös coinage at Alexandria of 134/135 through 136/137, see Chapter 9 n. 44.

24. *HA Hadr.* 14.5.

25. Itinerary: Birley 1997, 241–247. Besa: Weber 1907, 248 n. 900. Date of foundation of Antinoöpolis: *Chron. pasch.* p. 475 D and *POxy.* XXXI 2553 line 1, cf. 4 (apotheosis of Antinoös dated to late October or early November) with Vout 2007, 56–59. Egyptian festival calendar: Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 52 (Staff of Sun) and 13, 39, and 69 (Osiris). *Isia* in Rome: evidence and discussion in Salzman 1991, 172.

26. For the "official version," citing Hadrian's *Autobiography*, Dio Cass. 69.11.2. Variant traditions: Dio Cass. 69.11.2–3; *HA Hadr.* 14.6; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.8–9, on which cf. *Suda* II 858 s.v. *paidika*). See Fündling 2006, 686–696 for ample discussion of the main sources.

27. Julian. *Caes.* 8 implies that Antinoös' body was lost, or at least long missing. The supposed funeral of Antinoös: Epiph. *Ancorat.* 106.8 (boat); cf. Clem. Al. *Protrep.* 4.49.1 (buried "augustly") and 3 (his tomb). Cenotaph (which allows for reburial elsewhere): Hegesipp. *Frag.* p. 218 R. On the problem, see Renberg 2010, 183–191.
28. See *HA Hadr.* 14.5; *Suda* N 518 s.v. Numenius; Clem. Al. *Protrep.* 4.49.2; Hegesipp. *Frag.* p. 218 R.
29. Origin of cult: Renberg 2010, with 191 for a summation of Greek, Roman, and Egyptian influences on Hadrian's institution of the cult. Incantations: Dio Cass. 69.11.3.
30. Hadrian's own dreams: note especially Dio Cass. 69.2.1 (omen of accession), *HA Hadr.* 26.10 (portending death), and especially *PGM* IV 2441–2621 (Pancrates' spell causes dreams to visit Hadrian). Hadrian's credence in the dreams of others: *HA Hadr.* 25.1–2; cf. Dio Cass. 69.3.6. The new star: Dio Cass. 69.11.4 (stressing the advice of his circle); also *Suda* II 858 s.v. *paidika* (Hadrian himself pronounces the catasterism). Flatterers establish Antinoös "in the moon": Tatianus *Ad Gr.* 10.1–2; cf. Origen C. *Cels.* 3.36.
31. *HA Hadr.* 14.7. Statues: Paus. 8.9.7 (mentioning also paintings); Dio Cass. 69.11.4 (noting their ubiquity); Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.7; *Suda* II 858 s.v. *paidika*. Actual orders: Clem. Al. *Protrep.* 4.49.2 and Origen C. *Cels.* 3.37; also Theodoretus *Gr. affect. cur.* 8.28 and Georg. Monach. *Chron.* ap. Migne, *PG* CX p. 60. Fear: already Just. *Apol.* 29.4 (writing as a younger contemporary of Hadrian); Athanas. C. *gentes* 9.40. Lack of opposition to cult: Tert. *Ad nat.* 2.10.11; cf. Athenagoras *Leg.* 30.2. For a possible epigraphic reference to imperial orders on that score, see *SEG* XXXIII 140 (from Athens in the year 130, quite fragmentary); more clearly *AE* 1972, 500 (Upper Moesia in 137).
32. The English translation is that of R. R. Myers (unpublished though accessible on www.antinopolis.org), in turn based on that of Grimm et al. 1994, 85.
33. In general on the obelisk and its text, Grimm et al. 1994. Its anomaly: Ashton 2010, 984. On its possible context(s), plus the obelisk and dream oracles, and English translations of selections from the obelisk text, see Renberg 2010, 174–179, 183–191.
34. Differentiation of cult among regions: Clem. Al. *Protrep.* 4.49.1; cf. Origen C. *Cels.* 3.36. Generalizing interpretations (a selection): Just. *Apol.* 29.4; Tert. *Adv. Marc.* 1.18.4 and *Apol.* 13; Socrates *HE* 3.23; Theophilus *Ad Autolyc.* 3.8.
35. For an overview, Meyer 1991, 183–260; for some highlights and additional finds, Oppen 2008, 177–197.
36. Coins of Veturius at Mantinea: Blum 1914, 37–38 and *RPC* III 325–334 with Von Mosch and Klostermeyer 2015, 299–303 on the engraver and date. Manipulation: see LHS Numismatik AG auction 96 (8 May 2006) lots 1494 and 1498.
37. Inscription from Mantinea: *IG* V 2 281; cf. also the epigram V 2 312 (Antinoös explicitly as *theos*), discussed below in text. Maintenance of cult in 170s: Paus. 8.9.8–9.
38. Medals and cult at Bithynium: see Blum 1914, 42–45 and *RPC* III 1109–1120 with Von Mosch 2001, also Nollé 2004. See also Šašel Kos 2009, 186–187 for the Antinoös medals of Bithynium in turn inspiring the production of votive plaques at Aquileia.
39. Lepcis Magna: *AE* 1950, 205. Lanuvium: Dessau, *ILS* 7212. Upper Moesia: *AE* 1972 500 with Šašel Kos 2009, adducing also a possible cult site at Carnuntum. A fragmentary dedication from Caesarea Maritima in Palestine may also refer to Antinoös as "god" (*deus*): *CIIP* II 1415. Tendency for provincial cities to assimilate Antinoös to locally worshipped deities: see the list at Meyer 1991, 163, and more generally Von Mosch and Klostermeyer 2015, 298.

40. Medals: von Mosch and Klostermeyer 2015, esp. 300–301. Athens and Eleusis: see especially *IG* II² 2059 (147/148 or later); also 2065 lines 25–27 (priest), and 3117 (festival of the “godlike youth”). Corinth: the priest Hostilius Marcellus, on whom see Blum 1914, 35–37 and *RPC* III 260–270 with von Mosch and Klostermeyer 2015, especially 285–299 (discussion), 317–319 (expanded catalogue of types). Delphi: Blum 1914, 34–35 and *RPC* III 442–446.

41. Nicopolis: Blum 1914, 34 nos. 4–6 and *RPC* III 532–538. Ancyra: Blum 1914, 51 and *RPC* III 2835–2839. Argos: *RPC* III 390–393. Cius: *RPC* III 1054–1056, cf. 1057–1058 and also (from an uncertain mint) 6570. Adramyteum: *RPC* III 1677. Mantinea: see n. 36 above. Koinon of Bithynia: *RPC* III 1025. Cf. also the situation at Corinth (*RPC* III 260–270), where only two of the 11 types for Antinoös offer a title.

42. For Corinth, see n. 40 above. All subsequent references are to *RPC* III. Delphi: 442–446. Mytilene: 1694, cf. 1693 (no title); Cyme: 1936–1937. Smyrna: 1975–1983; Ephesus: 2084. Calchedon: 1065–1066; Nicomedia: 1093–1097; Tium: 1191–1197. Sinope: 1228. Amisus: 1258, cf. 1260 (no title). Pergamum: 1738; Cyzicus: 1528; Hadrianotherae: 1631–1633 (“Heros Agathos”), and 1634. Sardis: 2407–2408; Tmolus: 2389; Philadelphia: 2386; Stratonicea-Hadrianopolis: 1786–1787. Sala: 2446–2447; Amorium: 2667. Tarsus: 3285–3297; Mallus: 3327; Aegeae: 3355. Alexandria: 6062–6064, 6073–6074, 6082, 6228, 6235, 6243; cf. 6086 and 6249 (no title).

43. Bithynium: *RPC* III 1109, cf. 1110–1120 (“theos”).

44. See in general Jones 2010, 78–79.

45. Dated issues of Amisus and Alexandria: see Chapter 9 nn. 43 and 44.

46. The majority of these *tesserae* are known only from the art market. For a representative sample (with comparanda), see Classical Numismatic Group Electronic Auction 353 (17 June 2015) lots 361–373. Occasionally these pieces carry dates, ranging from years “2” to “20” of an unknown era; that of Antinoöpolis is the easiest guess (see von Mosch and Klostermeyer 2015, 316 n. 86).

47. Hymn from Cyprus: *IKourion* 104, with the text, commentary, and translation of Lebek 1973. Inscription from Mantinea: *IG* V 2 312 (Antinoös explicitly as *theos*).

48. Manchester 2016.

49. Vatican: Museo Gregoriano Egiziano, inv. 22795 (Antinoös-Osiris), 22847 and 22849 (Janiform bust), all from Tivoli, and cf. the possible bust inv. 2170; also Museo Pio Clementino inv. 194 (Antinoös-Telamons, from Tivoli). Paris: Louvre inv. MA433. Munich: Egyptian Collection, inv. WAF 24. Dresden: Albertinum inv. AB.423 (probably from Tivoli). Chicago: inv. 1924.979 (from Tivoli). In general, Meyer 1991, 119–124.

50. For this, see Elsner 2006, 284.

51. Cairo Museum inv. CG 33267 with Parlasca 1969–2003, I 161 no. 167 (dating to the period of Hadrian) and (for the interpretation) Belting 1996, 88.

52. Birley 1997, 237 and 249–250; in detail on the foundation of the city, Zahrnt 1988.

53. Hellenism of Antinoöpolis: see, e.g., *SEG* XXVII 1031 (“New Greeks” as part of official titulature of inhabitants). Distinctive games and their influence: Remijsen 2015, 112–113. Circus: Humphrey 1986, 513–516. Text of the Antinoös obelisk on the circus and games: Grimm et al. 1994, 78.

54. On reactions to the foundation, see Paus. 8.9.7 and Hegesipp. *Frag.* p. 218 R (noting its existence); Tert. *De cor.* 13 and Clem. Al. *Protrep.* 4.49.3 (scandalized); Amm. Marc. 22.16.2 (complimentary); also Epiphan. *Panar.* 3.12.3; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.7. For additional literary sources on the city, see R. Pietschmann in *RE* I (1894) s.v. Antinoupolis 2 col. 2442.

55. Birley 1997, 254.

56. On the tribal organization of Antinoöpolis, see Bell 1940, 140–141 with Birley 1997, 253–256.

57. *RIC* II (Hadrian) 232 A and B, with reverse *DIVIS PARENTIBVS* (“to his divine parents”), showing confronted busts of Trajan and Plotina.

Chapter 8

1. The fundamental text of the Memnon inscriptions is that of Bernand and Bernand 1960, with Balbilla’s four poems at nos. 28–31 and Sabina’s graffito at no. 32. Cirio 2011 offers a welcome new edition of the Julia Balbilla poems and related inscriptions on the statue, with comprehensive discussion.

2. For the basic arguments presented here, see Brennan 1998.

3. See Strabo 17.1.46 and Paus. 1.42.3, and Tac. *Ann.* 2.61 for Germanicus’ visit. In general for testimonia for the statue (including the alleged role of Cambyses in damaging it), see Cirio 2011, 12–38; cf. also 40–42 on the source of the sound and epigraphic reactions to it.

4. Priests of the Memnon precinct: Philostr. *V A* 6.4; cf. also Balbilla in Bernand and Bernand 1960, no. 28.3–4. Source of the sound and its cessation: Bowersock 1984, 21–32.

5. Sen. *QNat.* 4.2.13; see also *OGIS* 666 (for the Sphinx). For sources on Balbillus see *PIR*² C 813 with Fein 1994, 112 n. 112.

6. Facella 2006 offers a detailed history of Commagene and its rulers. On the inclusive epithets, which had never been joined before, Ferrary 1988, 500–501. Dissolution of the kingdom of Commagene and annexation by Rome: Joseph. *BJ* 7.219–243 and Suet. *Vesp.* 8.4.

7. Epiphanes as “king”: Tac. *Hist.* 2.25; also *RPC* I Suppl. 3702 (72 CE) for Epiphanes and his brother Kallinikos each as “great kings” (cf. *RPC* I 3861, designated as “son kings,” apparently during their father’s period of secure rule). On Claudia Capitolina, see *PIR*² C 1086.

8. Suggestion of Balbilla as Sabina’s lover: Bowie 1974, 62; Birley 1997, 251.

9. On the family’s anti-Jewish attitude, see Birley 1997, 228–230 and 1997a, 196 and 200–202, 223–224. Balbillus as envoy to Claudius: Millar 1977, 86–87 (but cf. Fein 1994, 112 n. 112).

10. Basic sources in *PIR*² I 650 (Balbilla), I 151 (Philopappus) and I 302 (Herculanus; see esp. *IG* V 1 971 for his claim of descent from Castor and Pollux). On these last two individuals see also Puech 1992, at 4850–4855 and 4870–4873 (with emphasis on their friendship with Plutarch); Baslez 1992; and Birley 1997a, 210–212, 216–217, 223, 243. Balbilla’s dedication to Herculanus: *IG* V 1 489 and 575 (terming herself *anepesia* = “cousin”) with Spawforth 1978. For a discussion of the evidence on Philopappus in Egypt, see Baslez 1992, 93–97 (suggesting a visit between 94 and 96 CE).

11. On archaism, the classic treatment is that of Bowie 1974, esp. 177 and 181–194 on dialects. On Hadrian’s literary tastes and original compositions, see Fein 1994, 32–33, 37–38, 42–43, 47–60. The emperor’s intellectual competitiveness: *HA Hadr.* 14.8–11, 15.10, 16.7; cf. Marius Maximus ap. *Ael.* 3.9. His attraction to Antimachus of Colophon: Dio Cass. 69.4.6 and *HA Hadr.* 16.2 with Fündling 2006, 774–776. Status and popularity of Sappho in the Roman Empire: Brennan 1998, 219, with sources. Attraction of Sappho’s Lesbian dialect in itself in this general era: Apul. *Apol.* 9.

12. Memnon statue as expected tourist destination: Lucian *Toxaris* 27. Hadrian as “explorer of all curiosities”: Tert. *Apol.* 5.7. Authenticity of dialect: Thumb (I) 1909, 250–251. Elegiacs attributed to Sappho: *Suda* Σ 107 s.v. Sappho.

13. Bernand and Bernand 1960, 80–100 provides essential information on the physical aspects of the inscriptions under discussion, as well as the texts with (French) translation and commentary. For an appreciation of the literary qualities of Balbilla’s poetry, see Rosenmeyer 2008, and especially the detailed edition of Cirio 2011, 75–114.

14. See West 1977 with Cirio 2011, 98–99.

15. Balbilla unlikely to be a “queen”: personal communication to the author from E. Badian. Distribution of the epithet ‘Eusebes’: Breccia 1903, 98 and 117–118 (Seleucid and Attalid). Note also the prominence of *eusebeia* in Nemrud Dagh tomb inscription of Antiochus I: *OGIS* 383 lines 11–14 (the first words of his text proper); also lines 14, 26, 52, 106, 139, 191, 212.

16. See *RPC* III 5775 with Hahn 1994, 285 and 312.

17. Cf. Rosenmeyer 2008, 351–352, who points out the strong Sapphic parallels in Bernand and Bernand 1960, no. 30, but declines (p. 351) to endorse the idea that “Balbilla sets herself up as Sappho.”

18. *Pace* the reconstruction of Birley 1997, 250–251 and indeed Brennan 1998, 222.

19. Women’s poetry: Bernand and Bernand 1960, nos. 28–31 (Balbilla), 66 (Dionysia), 83 (Damo), 92–94 (Caecilia Trebulla) with Cirio 2011, 119–141. On the identification of (Claudia) Damo, see Brennan 1998, 229–232.

20. Rosenmeyer 2008, 337. Letter heights of Sabina’s poem: see Bernand and Bernand 1960, 99 (first line 25 mm, other three 20 mm) and compare p. 96 with their no. 31.

21. For the details of winter 130/131, Sijpesteijn 1969, 112–116 with the modifications and expansions of Birley 1997, 252–258. Hadrian’s arranging games at Antinoöpolis: J. and L. Robert, *Bulletin épigraphique* 1952, 190–196 no. 180. Games in Paulina’s memory: *IGRom.* IV 1519b. Sabina’s Alexandrian coins of “year 15” = 130/131: see *RPC* III 5769 (Hadrian bust/Sabina bust), 5770–5771 (Hadrian bust/Sabina as Demeter, respectively seated and standing), 5772–5774 (Sabina bust/Sabina as Demeter, seated) 5775 (Sabina bust/Sabina as Eusebeia, standing).

22. For what follows, see von Mosch and Klostermeyer 2015, 313–317.

23. See for the general chronology Halfmann 1986, 208 with the comments of Syme 1988, 164–165; von Mosch and Klostermeyer 2015, with summary chart at 316–317. Edict concerning Maroneia and Abdera: *SEG* LV 744 (dated to 131/132) with Jones 2011.

24. On these inscriptions, see *AE* 1972, 649 (Cestrus); *SEG* XLIX 1883 (Magydos), and XLIII 984 (Rhodiapolis). On Julia Sancta’s statue to Paulina, see *IGRom.* III 773 with Boatwright 1991, 528 (the other one is from statue-mad Lyttos in Crete, and dates to 124/125: *IC* I XVIII 43); on the tower, *CIG* 4340h = Le Bas and Waddington 1870–1876, 1361.

25. Syme 1988, 164–165 considered Hadrian’s visit to Lycian Phaselis and Patara on this leg of his journey “irrefragable,” on the basis of these cities’ erection of triple-arched monumental gates dedicated to the emperor, for which see *TAM* II 194 (Phaselis, dated 131) and 421 (Patara). On Velia Procla’s dedications, see especially *TAM* II 408 (theater), 419 (statue group at Patara), and 560 (inscription at Tlos) with Jameson 1966, 130–137. For the further (anonymous) dedications to Sabina at Patara see *TAM* II 412 (altar) and Şahin 2008, 603, and 605. On the term *euergetis* used of imperial women (previously only Antonia Minor, Messalina, and Domitia), see Angelova 2015, 88 with 304 n. 131, adducing *IEph.* 4108 = McCabe, *Ephesos* 1006 *thea sebaste euergetis*, also a

private inscription to Sabina. On the identity of the missing imperial benefactress in Procla's statue group, see *SEG* LVIII 1623.

26. On these inscriptions, see *SEG* XLIII 728 (Tralles), and cf. XL 932 (Aphrodisias, highly questionable); *SEG* XXXIII 1132 (Hierapolis); and *IMagn.* 176 plus p. 296 = McCabe, *Magnesia* 207 (Magnesia).

27. See *AE* 1939, 190 = Pilhofer 2009, no. 208 with Benario 1980 on the epithet (however, arguing for wholly sincere praise on the part of Philippi). See, however, *RIC* IV (Marcus Aurelius) 208a, an aureus of 177 celebrating the marriage of the 15-year-old Commodus to Bruttia Crispina, with the reverse dedication to DIS CONIVGALIBVS.

28. *Syll.*³ 842 (Epidauros) assigns to the year 132 both the inauguration of the temple of Zeus and the foundation of the Panhellenion. Celebrations at completion of temple: Jones 1996, 34. For the Panhellenion sanctuary and games, Dio Cass. 69.16.2. On the Panhellenion, see especially Jones 1996 and 1999; Romeo 2002; and Nasrallah 2010, 96–101 (on this league's fame and longevity); cf. also Walker 2002 for building in Cyrene. Hadrian as *Panhellenios* and *Panionios*: see evidence collected in Benjamin 1963, 72–73. On Sabina as 'Hera' and "New Hera" in response to her husband's identification with Zeus, see Hahn 1994, 276–278. Hadrian's temple of Hera and Zeus Panhellenios at Athens: Paus. 1.18.6 with Jones 1996, 32–33.

29. Halfmann 1986, 208–209 is one of the most prominent of those who have argued for the "early" return of 132, on which see the critique of Syme 1988, 165–168. Evidence for a return to Rome between 9 December 132 and 8 April 133: *AE* 2010, 1856 = Eck, et al. 2010, with especially 197–198. Hadrian at Rome on 5 May 134: *IGRom.* I 149. At Naples in August/September 134: *SEG* LVI 1359 and LIX 1410. Date of detour to 'Illyricum': *AE* 1957, 135 with Syme 1988, 165 and 168 (making the case against Halfmann's argument for the year 131). Road improvements dated to Hadrian's "Year 16" (= 132) in Pannonia Superior: *AE* 1973, 427; *CIL* III 5744 and Hild, *Supp. CIL* III 380 (roads); *AE* 2002, 1127 = 2003, 1348 (bridge). In Noricum: *CIL* III 5733 and *AE* 1980, 662.

30. For the inscription of 132/133, see *IEph.* 278 = McCabe, *Ephesos* 1010. Earlier public inscriptions to Sabina by the Ephesian *boule* and *demoi* may lack *thea* and they certainly lack the matronymic: *IEph.* 280 = McCabe, *Ephesos* 1002 (124/125); *IEph.* 441 plus add. p. 41 = McCabe, *Ephesos* 777 (128/129). Subsequent public inscriptions at Ephesus, with *thea* and matronymic: *IEph.* 279 = McCabe, *Ephesos* 1011 (134/135); *IEph.* 4334 = McCabe, *Ephesos* 1013 (?136/137). Private inscription on a base (undated, but after 128) to *thea Sabina Sebaste*: *IEph.* 4108 = McCabe, *Ephesos* 1006, with Salomies 1992, 42. Sabina's (divine) matronymic at Magnesia: see n. 26 above.

31. Von Mosch and Klostermeyer 2015, 314–315, with summary chart on 317. The remainder of their route, in which Hadrian travels first to the middle Danube and then as far as Noricum before returning to Judaea, is less persuasive.

32. See Cabanes 1987; also Zachos 2013, 268 with n. 75. For a pairing of Zeus Dodonaïos and Artemis on the coinage of Dodona, see *SNG Copenhagen* 139 (first century BCE).

33. In general, see the discussion of Hahn 1994, 281–284 for sources and bibliography. Archaic statue of Artemis Kelkaia: Arr. *Anab.* 7.19.2. Additional physical evidence for the cult: *CIG* II 1947 = Samsárís 1994, no. 16 (dedication of a column); *CIL* III 3156a = Dessau, *ILS* 4045 (statue base of a three-formed Diana); cf. *CIL* V 198* (with Mommsen counting it as a forgery, without argument).

34. On Arrian, Epictetus, and Hadrian at Nicopolis, see Birley 1997, 59–61. Hadrian and Epictetus: *HA Hadr.* 16.10. Spartan embassy: *SEG* XI 493. We lack a date for the death of Epictetus, but it may have come only ca. 135 (as most scholars hold), or

even later. H.-J. von Arnim in *RE* VI (1909) s.v. Epiktetos 4 coll. 126–128 collects the evidence.

35. Artemis on Hadrianic reverses: *RPC* III 510, 516, 521; cf. 570–572 (Hadrian issuing coins at Nicopolis in the name of Augustus). On the possible representation of the ‘Kelkaion’ temple on coins: *RPC* III 520 and IV 4201 with Zachos 2013, 270–271.

36. On Nicopolitan participation in the *Panhellenia* festival, see *SEG* L 199.

Chapter 9

1. *HA Hadr.* 26.5 with the commentary of Fündling 2006, 1137–1146; *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 14.5–6. On the date of construction, see Chapter 6 n. 22.

2. *Vicennalia*: see *POsl.* III 77 line 15 (a calendar of Egyptian Tebtunis, dating to ca. 169–176).

3. See Birley 1997, 4 and 287–288 (threat by the nomadic Alani to Roman Cappadocia), 290–291 (Pannonia).

4. See especially Hadrian’s letter to tiny Naryx in Boeotia (probably by March/April 138): *SEG* LI 641 = LVI 565 with Jones 2006. Other securely dated examples of Hadrian’s correspondence from the years 135–138: *SEG* XXXII 462 (to Coroneia in Boeotia in 135); XXXVII 593 = XXXIX 640 (to the Macedonian *koinon* in 137; LIX 1424 (to Pergamum, dated 22 December 137).

5. Gabii dedication: Dessau, *ILS* 321, with *CIL* XIV 2797 (aqueduct) and *AE* 1982, 142 (Juno precinct) and the discussion of Boatwright 2000, 31–32. The Rome dedication of Sabina restored by Julia Domna: Dessau, *ILS* 324. On the *ordo matronarum*, see Hemelrijk 1999, 12–14 with corresponding notes (esp. 226 n. 26 for the quotation); on Elagabalus’ alleged *senaculum* on the Quirinal, *HA Heliogab.* 4.3–4 and cf. *Aurel.* 49.6–7. On the worship of the protective deities known as the ‘*matres*’/‘*matronae*’ (a markedly provincial cult, and most unlikely to be relevant here), see Takács 2007, 118–121. On the general reluctance of Trajanic and Hadrianic imperial women to engage in public liberality, see Boatwright 1991, esp. 523–525 on Sabina.

6. *CIL* XV 7313a (Sabina), on which see Carandini 1969, 205 (which he regards as belonging to a *domus Sabinae*); also XV 7306 (Matidia II). For women donating or owning public baths in the imperial period, see Hemelrijk 2015, 123–125. For Hadrian’s interest in public baths, Dio Cass. 69.8.2; *HA Hadr.* 17.5.

7. See *CIL* XV 530, 1–3 (123 CE); and Bloch 1947, 38 no. 144 (132 CE), with *CIL* XV 510, 1–2 (bricks of A. Gabinius Augustalis). On women of the imperial era in the brick industry, see Setälä 2002 (attesting 50 in all); on specifically women of the imperial family, Chausson and Buonapane 2010, and Bloch 1947, 53–54 for the securely attested brickyards of Matidia II.

8. See Appendix 2 C35, C37, C45, and N109–111; and, possibly from the Villa Hadriana, cf. C24 (seemingly earlier than others in that group) and N107 (which may show Sabina after her consecration).

9. See Abdy 2014 with Appendix 1.

10. *RIC* II (Hadrian) 82 (from ca. 119–122).

11. On this goddess’s two sanctuaries in Rome, P. Gros in *LTUR* V (1999) s.v. *Venus Victrix*, Aedes 120–121 (cf. 292). For emperors and empresses who subsequently show her on their coin reverses, see Cohen (VIII) 1880–1892, 442, to which one can add Ulpia Severina, the wife of Aurelian (cgb.fr Mail Bid Sale 53, 19 April 2012).

12. See Strack 1931–1933, no. 362. For Hadrian’s PVDIC(itia) issue, *RIC* II (Hadrian) 135 (from the period ca. 119–122) with Noreña 2007. On the (named) appearance of Pudicitia—and, starting in the mid-third century, Pudicitia Augusta—on imperial coins later than Sabina, see Cohen (VIII) 1880–1892, 425.

13. The quotation from Abdy comes from a personal communication. Note Sabina as ‘Eusebeia’ (= Pietas) at Alexandria in 130/131: *RPC* III 5775. See *RIC* II (Trajan) 758 and (Hadrian) 432 and 428, respectively, for a standing Pietas on coins of Matidia I (labeled PIETAS AVG) and L. Aelius Caesar (unlabeled).

14. The reckoning of types (here and elsewhere in this work) should be regarded as provisional and only a minimum; R. Abdy in the forthcoming *RIC* II 2 seems set (to judge from his notes, which he has graciously shared with me) to increase the number of types for this fourth group significantly—perhaps by as much as a third. That increase will serve to strengthen the arguments presented here on the volume of Sabina’s coinage. The new edition of *RIC* II 2 doubtless will also necessitate some tweaks in the chronology. Abdy 2014 dates the introduction of descriptive reverses for Sabina to “c[a]. 131–135.” However, in this work I use the range “ca. 130/131–135,” since the author has communicated to me that in *RIC* II 2 he may bring forward that move to 130 (“probably quite late in the year”), to coincide with associated developments in Hadrian’s coinage.

15. Cohen (VIII) 1880–1892, 397–398 provides the relevant lists, which include also the emperors Gallienus (253–268) and Claudius Gothicus (268–270).

16. Cohen (VIII) 1880–1892, 442, listing also the emperors Marcus Aurelius and Septimius Severus.

17. See Cohen (VIII) 1880–1892, 394 (Indulgentia), 414–415 (Pietas, Pietas Augusta, and related), and 425 (Pudicitia and Pudicitia Augusta).

18. For the earlier Hadrian Libertas coins (ca. 119–122), see *RIC* II (Hadrian) 92–93, and 583–584. For the later types (ca. 134–138), 818 and cf. 819. On the use of the reverse type previous to Hadrian, see Brennan 2000, 45 (cf. 57). On the distribution of the legend in the imperial coinage, Cohen (VIII) 1880–1892, 404–405.

19. See Abdy 2014, 84, and cf. Cohen (VIII) 1880–1892, 444–446.

20. For a Hadrianic medallion (not a coin) from the mid-120s showing Cybele, issued in either two or three different sizes, see Mittag 2010, 77–80, suggesting that the Cybele type might have been meant to evoke Sabina. For a cistophoric Sabina/Cybele coin (probably late 120s), *RPC* III 1363 = *RIC* II (Hadrian) 533 = Metcalf 1980, Type 34 nos. 175–176. For the Sabina/Cybele *sestertius*, see Strack 1931–1933, 499a with the discussion of Turcan 1983, 25–26, each (unnecessarily) connecting the type with Sabina’s divinization. The name ‘Cybele’ never appears on the Roman imperial coinage. See Cohen (VIII) 1880–1892, 407 for the accepted forms of this goddess’s name (Mater Magna, Mater Deum, etc.), and cf. 375.

21. A coin of Germe in Mysia omits both *Augustus* and *Augusta* for the couple: *RPC* III 1769 with Hahn 1994, 292 n. 26. Cf., probably from Parium, and also lacking honorifics, *RPC* III 1546 (Aelius and Sabina on reverse, and thus not before mid-136) and 1544–1545 (Hadrian and Sabina).

22. For a roster of the relevant Alexandria coins, see Chapter 7 n. 22. Aegeae: *RPC* III 3354 (128/129), 3350 (129/130), 3351 (130/131), 3352 (133/134).

23. Amisus: *RPC* III 1270–1274 (Hermes); Waddington et al. (I 1) 1904–1912, 64–65 no. 99 and *RPC* III 1276–1277 (Artemis); 1278 (Hera); 1283–1284 (Securitas); 1291 (Demeter); 1294 (Aphrodite). Epiphanea: *RPC* III 3394. On the provincial era of Amisus, see Leschhorn 1993, 106. On the Hadrianic coinage of this city, Nordbø 1988; on that of Aegeae, Haymann 2014.

24. Hahn 1994.
25. Amandry 2012, 391.
26. Bronze coins of the Bithynian *koinon* feature Sabina on the obverse and a temple, in three styles, on the reverse, sometimes conspicuously marked as Roman by the presence of features such as the Capitoline triad (*RPC* III 988, 1022), wolf with twins (1011–1012), and what might be a statue of the empress (990); see also 1008, 1001, 1023–1024. But the reverses of the *koinon*'s coins for Hadrian also are dominated by these temples: see 968–1021. On the *koinon*'s silver coinage for Sabina, see n. 32 below. Coins with Sabina on obverse from Corinth: 240–243; Patras: 288–292. Apamea: 1034. For a Hadrian/Sabina type from Aelia Capitolina, see 3968.
27. On the Cilician silver coinage, for Tarsus compare *RPC* III 3275–3277 (silver) and 3284 (bronze), with the reverse derived from Hadrianic coinage of Antioch (3737–3740, dated to 128/129); Mopsus: 3360–3361; Aegeae: compare 3354 (Sabina/Tyche, dated 128/129, in bronze), to 3350–3352 (129/130, 130/131, and 133/134, in silver). Hadrian's creation of a *koinon* for Cilicia: Birley 1997, 260.
28. Seleucia's 'Europa' coin for Sabina: *RPC* III 3235. For clear contemporary instances of the Europa type, see, e.g., *RPC* III 27 and 37 from Crete, and 3867 (dated to 117) from Sidon (Trajan); also from Sidon, 3869 and 3867 (Hadrian, dated to 117 and 118). Later types from Seleucia: IV 10278 (Commodus); Gitbud and Naumann Auction 37 (1 November 2015) lot 577 (Julia Domna).
29. For a sampling of representations of Artemis Tauropolos at Amphipolis, see *SNG ANS* 150 (before 167 BCE); then for the imperial period, *RPC* I 1626, 1629–1630 (Augustus), 1636 (Tiberius for Divus Augustus), 1631–1633, 1635 (Tiberius), 1634 (Julia Augusta = Livia), 1637 (Caligula), 1639–1640 (Claudius), III 644 (Trajan), 650, 652, 654, 657A (Hadrian). On the cult and its dispersal, Bilde 2003.
30. For sharing of the relevant reverse types at Amisus, compare *RPC* III 1265–1269 (Hadrian) with 1270–1274 (Sabina) (134/135); 1278–1281 (Hadrian) with 1282–1284 (Sabina) (135/136); and 1289–1290 (Hadrian) with 1291 (Sabina) (136/137). Types unique to Sabina: Waddington, *RG I* 1 64–65 no. 99 and *RPC* III 1276–1277 (Artemis, 134/135 and 135/136) and 1294 (Aphrodite, 137/138).
31. Alexandrian coinage: see Chapter 8 n. 21. Sabina issue of Ilium: *RPC* III 1574, and compare for the iconography, for Athena, e.g., III 374 (from a Hadrian issue at Argos), and for Hera, 587 (from a Trajan issue at Phoenice). Athena is presented on the Hadrianic coinage of Ilium with helmet and spear (see III 1568–1569, 1573), which are not found here. Sardis (standing with wand): *RPC* III 2404; Sabina's hairstyle on the obverse is of a type not seen before 130/131.
32. On the Hadrianic *cistophori*, for the Fortuna and Pietas reverses, see Chapter 6 n. 40, and for Sabina/Cybele, n. 20 above. The reverse types of two further *cistophori* from the Bithynian mint, *RPC* III 963 (Hadrian P P/Fortuna) and 964 (Hadrian P P/Artemis as huntress) seem to suggest Sabina. Note also Hadrian/Sabina: *RPC* III 962 (Bithynian mint) and 1394 (assigned to a mint at Hierapolis in Phrygia).
33. Hahn 1994, 284. On the coins, for Zephyrion: *RPC* III 3251–3253 (AE, i.e., bronze, Hadrian/Sabina). Pompeiopolis: 3245 (AE Hadrian/Sabina). Tarsus: 3275–3277 (AR, i.e., silver, Hadrian/Sabina), 3284 (AE Sabina/Boule). Mopsus: 3360–3361 (AR Hadrian/Sabina). Aegeae: 3350–3352 (AR Hadrian/Sabina), 3354 (AE Sabina/Tyche). Epiphanea: 3394 (AR Hadrian/Sabina). Mallus: 3326 (AR Sabina/Tyche). Cestrus: 3188 (AE Sabina/star and crescent). Seleucia ad Calycadnum 3234 (with date 135/136) and 3236 (Apollo and Artemis/Athena), 235 (AE Sabina/Europa).
34. For what follows, see Hahn 1994, 273–291, with 312–320.

35. On Sabina's assimilation with Isis, see Geissen 2008, 222–223; for a (rare) parallel, cf. *RPC* I 1756 (Poppaea Sabina, from Thrace). Alexandria did not mint types for Plotina (or Marciana or Matidia); for a Plotina/Isis coin from Aegeae in Cilicia (without assimilation), see *RPC* III 1920A. On Euthenia, Hahn 1994, 281.

36. For references to the relevant inscriptions from Ephesus, Patara, Tlos, and Nicopolis, see Chapter 8 nn. 25, 30, 32. Megara: see *IG* VII 73 and 74, and cf. 70–72, noting Hadrian as *imperator II*, and thus dating no earlier than late 135; the same governor of Achaea features in the dating formula of all five of the inscriptions, thus confirming that they form a contemporaneous set. Mytilene: Benjamin 1963, 79 no. 165. Thasos: *IG* XII *Suppl.* 440 (with “New Hera”) and 441.

37. See Chapter 8 for dedications and an altar to Sabina as “New Hera” in Lycia (Patara and Tlos, probably 130/131), and for honors as *Juno Coniugalis* at Philippi in Macedonia. As Hera at Metropolis: *IGRom.* IV 1595 = *IEph.* 3411 = McCabe, *Metropolis* 21. As “New Hera” at Kasaba: *IGRom.* IV 1492; on the identity of the dedicant, see Swain 1996, 163–164 (possibly the daughter of an attested friend of Plutarch). For Sabina as “New Hera” at Thasos, see n. 36 above; cf. Collart and Devambrez 1931, 181 no. 9 (Amphipolis).

38. See Clinton 1989, 1523, against the supposed reference to Sabina as Demeter in *IG* II² 1088 line 49 (decree at Athens of Thyatira in Lydia). “New Demeter” at Megara: see n. 36 above. For the inscription set up (after 128/129) by Larcia Gepaipyris at Perinthus-Heracleia to Sabina as (?New) Demeter, see *IGRom.* I 785 with Raycheva 2015, 23–24 on the question whether it belongs to a temple or a theater.

39. Alexandria coins: *RPC* III 5770–5774. Note, e.g., that at Perinthus a portrait of Sabina is juxtaposed with a Demeter reverse (*RPC* III 715), but also one of Hera (716–717), plus Dionysus (718–719). More generally on the coinage of this city (where Demeter had long featured), see Schönert 1965, 276–277 (index of types), with 155–156 nos. 379–387 on the Sabina issues.

40. Note the Artemis Laphria coins of Patras: *RPC* III 289 (Sabina); 277 and 283 (Hadrian); cf. II 231 (Domitian). Sabina issues at Amphipolis: *RPC* III 656 (Artemis Tauropolos), cf. 655 (personification of the city). But for the Tauropolos reverses of Trajan, see III 642–644; of Hadrian, 649–654, 657A–658. Sabina reverses with Artemis Ephesia: Ionia: *RPC* III 2081 (Ephesus); 1999 (Teos). Lydia: 2541 (Ancyra), 2500–2501 (Cadi), 2555 (Iulia Gordus), 1782 (Stratonicea). Yet note other Sabina reverses of Ephesus: 2079 (Nike), 2080 (Dikaiosyne); cf. 2078 (ethnic in wreath).

41. See Hahn 1994, 289–290.

42. References in *RPC* III for the Antinoös medals of these cities: Bithynium 1110–1120, cf. 1109 (coin); Nicomedia 1093–1095, cf. 1096–1097 (coins); Calchedon 1065–1066; Cius 1054–1058; Tium 1191–1194, cf. 1195–1197 (coins); Ancyra in Galatia 2835–2839; Smyrna 1975–1983; Cyme 1936–1937; Tarsus 3285, cf. 3286–3297 (medals or coins); Aegeae 3355; Mantinea (Veturius minting “for the Arcadians”) 325–334; Corinth (Hostilius Marcellus minting “for the Corinthians”) 260–268, 270, cf. 269 (possibly a coin). Cf. also *RPC* III 2084 for an Antinoös issue at Ephesus (probably a coin).

43. Amisus strikings of 133/134 for Hadrian: *RPC* III 1253–1257; Antinoös: 1258 (medal), 1260 (coin). On Amisus' Sabina issues of 134/135 through 137/138, see nn. 23 and 30 above.

44. For an overview of the Antinoös issues at Alexandria, see Blum 1914, 42, 53–57. Antinoös' coins for 134/135: *RPC* III 6062 and 6064 (drachm), 6073–6074 (hemi-drachm), 6082 and 6086 (diobol), and cf. 6063 (?medal or?didrachm, possibly not

genuine). 135/136: Dattari 1901, nos. 2086 and 2089 (drachms). 136/137: *RPC* III 6228 (drachm), 6235 and 6243 (hemidrachm), 6249 (diobol). For the Sabina bronze issues at Alexandria, see Chapter 7 n. 22.

45. Note the relative dimensions/weights of the following coins in *RPC* III for comparison. Mallus: 3326 (S[abina]), 3327 (A[ntinöos]). Mytilene: 1691–1692 (S), 1693–1694 (A). Sardis: 2403–2406 (S), 2407–2408 (A). Argos: 388–389 (S), 390–393 (A). Hadrianotherae: 1630 (S), 1633–1634 (A, and cf. 1631–1632 for his medals). Tmolus: 2388 (S), 2387 (Hadrian and Aelius Caesar), 2389 (A). Sala: 2445 (S), 2446–2447 (A).

46. Quotations (and discussion that follows) from Abdy 2014, 79.

47. For simultaneous hair fashions at Alexandria in 130/131, see *RPC* III 5773; in 131/132, *RPC* III 5787, 5804–5810 (hair on top) vs. 5788 (hair in queue), with Nicolai 2007, 94. For a more schematic analysis of the progression of Sabina's hairstyles, see Da Costa 1999, 3–4 (also holding that Sabina's earliest numismatic portraits resemble those of Matidia I, but not finding resonances of Plotina in the later ones).

48. For the "Matidian" style at Amisus: *RPC* III 1274 (134/135) and 1276–1277 (135/136, but see below). Queue: 1270–1273 (134/135), 1282–1284 (135/136), 1291 (136/137), 1294 (137/138). General discussion: Abdy 2014, 79 and 82.

49. For the second "hair up" style on the Amisus coins of 135/136, see *RPC* III 1276–1277, with Adembri 2007, 79 and Abdy 2014, 83–84.

50. See Appendix 1 for appearances of the "Matidian" (i) hairstyle in groups 1, 2, 3A (spanning ca. 128–131), 4A (ca. 131–135), and 4G (ca. 135–137).

51. See Appendix 2 C55 with C39, C42–43, C46, C49–50, C53, and C56–61.

52. See, for instance, C1, C3, C35, C37, C42, and C63, each of which has been observed to offer points of contact with at least four other sculptures in our selection.

53. In addition to C1, C3, C5, C17, C37, and N103 (which offer parallels in various degrees to Sabina's earliest hairstyles on her Rome coinage), see C24, C35, C38–40, C65–66, N109, N111.

54. See Appendix 2 C47 and N106.

55. For a late Sabina *sestertius* with standing Ceres, British Museum inv. 1984, 0902.1 (unpublished). For the coins of Alexandria of 130/131, see Chapter 8 n. 21; and see n. 23 above for the questionable relevance of Demeter on the dated silver coinage of Amisus.

56. Adembri 2007, 79–80.

57. See Adembri 2007, 81 for the description. For sculptural examples, see Appendix 2 C35 and N110, each from the Villa Hadriana, and also N102, now in Torino. The knot is especially striking in N107 (ex-Boston, repatriated to Tivoli), where this feature rises prominently above the veiled head. It also recurs in the veiled heads N101 and (more developed) N109, excavated in the 1960s at Lucus Feroniae and the Villa Hadriana, respectively.

58. Coins: *RPC* III 3952 (Gaba, but interpreting date as "134/135"); Waddington, *RG* I 1 64–65 no. 99 with plate IX no. 18 (Amisus); *RIC* II (Hadrian) 420a (Rome). See also Carandini 1969, 233 with n. 1 for the hair-knot on these dated provincial coins, and 171–172 for his discussion of C35.

59. Adembri 2007, 81–82 with 85 nn. 35 (apotropaic significance); and especially Nicgorski 1995, 76–77 (Egypt), 158 (Alexander), 116–117 (virgins), 187 (Apollo), 241–242 (Aphrodite).

60. Portrait of Cleopatra: Museo Gregoriano inv. no. 38511, discussed at Gkikaki 2011, 504–505, 519–521. On the *uraeus*, see Maehler 2003.

61. See *RPC* III 5769 (reverse), 5772, 5774–5775 (obverse), all from 130/131; 5788 (reverse, looking distinctly like a square knot), from 131/132; 6069–6072 (obverse, 134/135); 6124 (obverse, 135/136). The actual flower is frequent on the Alexandrian coins of the second century CE, but not as a hair decoration.

62. See *RPC* I 2359 for a Pergamene issue (generally dated 10–2 BCE) showing Livia and her stepdaughter, Julia, each with a front hair knot. For a discussion of the *nodus* coiffure, Adembri 2007, 38 (Triumviral and Augustan era) and 39 (Trajanic examples); and more fully Kleiner 2005, especially 242–265 (with ample bibliography).

Chapter 10

1. See M. Torelli in *LTUR* I (1993) s.v. Arco di Portogallo 77–79, with a survey of views on the date; and, for the demolition, Habel 217–218, 251–252.

2. On the technical aspects of the relief panels, Wace 1907, 258–263, with 260 for the quotation. For a discussion of the *adlocutio* relief, VanderLeest 1995, with ample survey of previous views. For bibliography on the apotheosis scene, see Appendix 2 C64. On the proportions of figures, see Vogel 1973, 49–50 (counting, however, three scales).

3. In general on the consecration of Roman emperors, Zanker 2004. On the *decursio* and attendant ceremonies, Dio Cass. 56.42.2 (29 CE) and 75.4.2–5.5 (193 CE) with Vogel 1973, esp. 56–81. Specifically on encircling parades at imperial funerals, see Boatwright 1985, 494–495 (pointing out that dance was incorporated into the funerals of Livia and Drusilla).

4. On the pedestal and its (missing) column, S. Maffei in *LTUR* I (1993) s.v. Columna Antonini Pii 302–305, Davies 2004, 40–42 (with discussion also of numismatic evidence on the column), and especially Vogel 1973 (with 50 on the scale of the sculptures and 121 n. 47 on the eagle as a symbol of apotheosis).

5. See Vogel 1973, 47–55, with quotations from 48. Argument for an altar as the original context for the Conservatori panels: Boatwright 1985, 497.

6. E.g., VanderLeest 1995 takes it as depicting Hadrian's eulogy for the deceased L. Aelius Caesar, and the boy in foreground as his young son, Lucius Verus, the future emperor.

7. Quotations from Vogel 1973, 50 and 54; see also 39 and 49 for a large acanthus capital from Lorium (where Antoninus Pius died) showing paired medallion portraits of the divinized emperor and empress on its four sides, each resting either on an eagle (Pius) or peacock (Faustina I), gendered markers of apotheosis.

8. On Aelius Caesar's funeral and honors, see *HA Ael.* 6.6 and 7.1. On Antoninus' (extravagant) honors for Faustina I, see *HA Ant. Pius* 6.7, with Levick 2014, 123–126 (especially on the magnificent temple at Rome, positioned on the Via Sacra at the east-end of the central Forum).

9. See *CIL* VIII 799 = 12266 (Avitta Bibba) and *AE* 1951, 43 and 44 (Mactar); and for the coins, *RPC* III 1546 (?Parium), 2388 with 2387 (Tmolus), plus the dated issues 1294 (Amisus) and 3394 (Epiphanea). For the other coins of Amisus of "Year 169," see *RPC* III 1292–1293 (Hadrian), 1295 (Aelius), 1926 (Antoninus as Caesar). On the double-bust bronze coinage from the end of Hadrian's reign, Sabina and L. Aelius (but not Antoninus) share Hadrian bust obverse/reverse dies (personal communication from R. Abdy). For further discussion of the date of death, see Hahn 1994, 274 (coming to the same conclusion as here). On the relief, Levick 2014, 124 takes the heir depicted to

be Antoninus Pius, without argument. Birley 1997, 294 dates Sabina's consecration as "no earlier than March 138," also assigning the inscriptions of Hadrian's "Year XXI" (erroneously, I feel) to 137/138.

10. See *HA Hadr.* 23.1–10, with cross-reference to 15.8; cf. Dio Cass. 69.17.1–2.

11. [Aur. Vict.] *Epit.* 14.1–12, with notice of Sabina at 14.8.

12. For the quotation, Birley 1997, 294. On the traditional charges of poison, and discussion of modern speculation that Hadrian may have put Sabina to death for political reasons, see Fündling 2006, 1025–1027. Hadrian (in his *Autobiography?*) on the death of Vespasian, Dio Cass. 66.17.1.

13. Protracted illness: Dio Cass. 69.17.2–3, 20.1, 22.1; cf. Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.10. Premonitions of death: *HA Hadr.* 26.6–8, 10. Attempted remedies: Dio Cass. 69.22.1, *HA Hadr.* 25.1–4. Hadrian's contemplation of suicide, both unassisted and assisted: Dio Cass. 69.17.2, 22.1–3 (detailing the intervention of his doctor Hermogenes, on whom see *SEG XXXVI* 929), cf. *HA Hadr.* 25.1. *Autobiography* preface: Cornell 2013, 1088 no. 97 F 7 = *PFayum* 19 with Birley 1997, 299. Death at Baiae, with date: Dio Cass. 69.23.1, *HA Hadr.* 25.6–7, Antigonos ap. Heph. Astr. *Apotel.* 2.18.24; cf. also Dio Cass. 69.17.2, *HA Marc.* 6.1, Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.2, Malalas *Chronogr.* 11.13 and 20 T. Hadrian's initial burial is also placed near Baiae: *HA Hadr.* 25.7, 27.3–4, *Marc. Aur.* 6.1. On the last poem (*HA Hadr.* 25.9) see Fündling 2006, 1111–1121.

14. Illness spurred cruelty: explicit at Dio Cass. 69.2.6. Hatred toward Hadrian at time of death: Dio Cass. 69.23.2; *HA Hadr.* 25.7. Miscellaneous (undated) list of adversaries: *HA Hadr.* 15.2–8 with Birley 1997, 292. Antoninus forestalls planned murders: *HA Hadr.* 25.8, *Ant. Pius* 2.4; also *Heliogab.* 7.9–10 (alleging Hadrian's temporary insanity). Murders actually carried out: Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.11.

15. Aelius Caesar: *HA Ael.* 4.7. Hadrian's last words: Dio Cass. 69.22.4. Dangers from even oral contraceptives (which were prevalent in antiquity): Riddle 1994, 16–30.

16. See Boatwright 1985 against the notion that a monumental "*ustrinum* [i.e., crematory] of Hadrian" existed in the western Campus; also Coarelli 2014.

17. For the quotation, Adembri 2007, 80–81.

18. Abdy 2014, 81 and 84–85.

19. For this sculpture, see Appendix 2 C63. Other commonly accepted post-consecration portraits are C64 (Portogallo relief) and C65 (Ceres type from Ostia). See also C66, C68bis, N102, N104–105, N107, and N110.

20. See Wood 2015, 237–240.

21. Cameo: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles, inv. Camee 265.

22. For the Sabina types, see *RIC* II (Hadrian) 419 and 1052, and 389A for that of Hadrian himself (issued by Antoninus Pius). For a selection of types from subsequent regimes showing this theme, see *RIC* III (M. Aurelius) 1702 (for Faustina II, died 176); III (Commodus) 659–660 (Marcus Aurelius, died 180); IV (Severus Alexander) 378 (Julia Maesa, died 223); IV (Maximinus) 2–3 (Paulina, died 236); V (Valerian) 6 (Mariniana, died by 253) and 9 (Valerian II, died 258).

23. Epigraphic commemoration of Sabina as *thea* and *diva* in the east is compiled by Hahn 1994, 274–276. For a rare instance of a provincial issue that notes an imperial *consecratio* in this era, see *RPC* III 3371 (Anazarbus in Cilicia for the deified Marciana, cf. 3364).

24. Carandini 1969, 130–131, comparing the five gems in question to *RIC* II (Hadrian) 420b.

25. For a dedication to the deified Sabina at Saldae in Mauretania Caesariensis, see *CIL* VIII 8929 with Kasdi 2015; at Thamugadi in Numidia, *CIL* VIII 17847. Sabrathans at Rome: *CIL* VI 40528 with Terpstra 2013, 134–135.

26. Tebtunis calendar: Chapter 9 n. 2. Sabratha's colonial status: Reynolds 1951, 119. Flavia Domitilla: see Chapter 1 n. 35.
27. In general, see P. Liverani in *LTUR Suburbium I* (2001) s.v. Aelii Hadriani Sepulcrum 15–19; also Davies 2010, 82–84 for the solar and cosmological aspects, and 109 for the bronze peacocks; on Hadrian and archaeoastronomy, see De Franceschini and Veneziano 2011.
28. See the sources collected in Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 446–447 no. 533; and especially Boatwright 1992 (with p. 20 for the quotation) and Wood 2015.
29. See Tac. *Ann.* 4.53.1 for the emperor Tiberius refusing to allow the widowed Agrippina the Elder from remarrying, an incident that Tacitus found only by perusing her daughter's political autobiography. More generally on Matidia II's unmarried status, Boatwright 1992, 27–28. Patara: see *TAM II* 419BC = *SEG LVIII* 1621 = *LIX* 1569 with Chapter 8 on Velia Procla.
30. Sources in Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 446–447 no. 533, to which add (from Suessa Aurunca) *AE* 1986, 148; 1991, 492; and 2006, 317. On the public inscription from Athens, see *IG II²* 3388, on which cf. *SEG XXXIV* 183 (with the editors unnecessarily suggesting as a date 119 or 128).
31. Rapid disappearance of the cult of deified Sabina: Hemelrijk 2015, 79–80. Ariminum: *CIL XI* 408, cf. 407 with Hemelrijk 2015, 81, 257, 413, 545. Cf. also Fishwick (vol. I 1^a) 1987–2005, 166 n. 109 on the lack of uniformity in Italian municipal cult titlature for priests and priestesses.
32. For Albucia Candida, see *CIL V* 6513 (bath complex) and 6514 (*flaminica* at both Novaria and Ticinum) with Hemelrijk 2015, 80–81, 124, 414 (and 79–80, 191 on priestesses in Italy for Marciana and Matidia I).
33. Vibia Aurelia Sabina: Raepsaet-Charlier 1987, 622–623 no. 800 with Levick 2014, 114–118. For the circumstances of remarriage, Birley 1999, 177; on her benefactions, Hemelrijk 2015, 249 n. 51.

Epilogue

1. R. Morris in *The Coin Collector's Journal* 8 (June 1883): 83.
2. Gibbon (I) 1776–1788, 77 with n. 12.
3. Lindgren 2013 (also citing the Antoninus Pius/Faustina II consecration base in this connection, though the fact it was excavated in 1703 removes it from consideration); Finch 1990, 65–67.
4. See De Guevara 1539, *Hadrian X* 456 and *XVII* 477 with Rivero 2004, 130–131. An English translation of Guevara's work was published by 1577.
5. De Serviez (II) 1752, 1 and 19.
6. Crevier (VII) 1756–1761, 176–177, an interpretation based on an over-literal reading of a textual crux in *HA Hadr.* 11.3, on which see Chapter 6.
7. See Feldman 2010, 263–265, which includes the text and translation of Metastasio's illuminating 20 September 1732 letter to Giuseppe Riva on how he decided to shape the character of Sabina.
8. Ebers 1881, 87 for the quotation. On the Egyptian setting of the works of Heyse, Hausrath, and Ebers, see Goldhill 2011, 232–234.
9. For the original painting (it has since been cut into smaller sections), Zimmern 1888, 24, with the analysis of Vout 2008, 67 on the “emperor-tourist.”

10. Ish-Kishor 1935, with 116 and 28 for the quotations; on the author's dispute with the American (but not the British) publisher over bowdlerization, see St. Jean 2002; in general, Brennan 2015, 117.
11. See Giglioli 1938 for the 1937/1938 exhibition; and Frascchetti Santinelli 1938, 3–4 for the quotation, with the discussion of Brennan 2015, 118–122.
12. On Eckhel's view, see Gregorovius 1898, 174, with further references. On Yourcenar's range of reference and working methods, see Bradley 2008 and 2016.
13. See Dio Cass. 69.3.2–3, 4.5, 5.1
14. *Inscr. Ital.* IV 1, 77 with the paraphrase of Birley 1997, 107.
15. *HA Hadr.* 14.5.
16. Bernand and Bernand 1960, no. 32.
17. Paus. 1.18.6; Benjamin 1963, 77 nos. 130 (Perinthus) 139 (Thasos).
18. Hahn 1994, 288.
19. Dio Cass. 66.17.1; *HA Hadr.* 20.3.
20. Hatred for Hadrian: *HA Hadr.* 25.1. Honors for Faustina I: Levick 2014, 123.

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